





COLONEL C. E. STEWART, C B, C M G., C I E

*[Frontispiece*



# THROUGH PERSIA IN DISGUISE

WITH REMINISCENCES OF THE  
INDIAN MUTINY

PART I  
THE INDIAN MUTINY AND UMBEYLAH CAMPAIGN

PART II  
THROUGH PERSIA IN DISGUISE

BY  
COLONEL CHARLES E. STEWART, C.B., C.M.G., C.I.E.  
*(Late 5th Punjab Infantry and H.M.'s Consul-General at Odessa)*

EDITED FROM HIS DIARIES

BASIL STEWART

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WITH SEVENTEEN FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS (TWO IN  
COLOURS), TWO MAPS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE following pages are chiefly due to an oft-expressed desire of numerous friends and acquaintances of the late Colonel Charles Edward Stewart, for a volume setting forth the incidents of his adventurous career spent in the service of his country in India and Persia.

After his retirement in 1899, Colonel Stewart wrote up his diaries *in extenso* with the idea of publishing them, but for one reason and another, nothing came of them during his lifetime.

Recently, however, Mrs Stewart entrusted her late husband's diaries and MSS. to me with a view to something definite being done, the outcome of which is the present volume.

In order to put ~~these diaries~~ into a form suitable for publication, it has naturally been necessary to re-write them considerably, but I have endeavoured to keep them as far as possible as Colonel Stewart left them, so that they may reflect the handiwork of their distinguished author.

The narrative is arranged chronologically throughout, which accounts for the apparent inversion of the title which has been selected. Where thought desirable, a foot-note has been inserted to elucidate the context.

Mrs Stewart has contributed an introductory chapter giving a sketch of her husband's career, and

mentioning a few episodes which do not appear in his own narrative ; and I wish to here acknowledge my indebtedness to her for her valuable assistance in the preparation of this volume. It may not be out of place to here mention that Mrs Stewart was the first lady to travel overland from England to India *viâ* the Danube, Syria, and the Tigris, a journey made with her husband after their marriage in 1869.

My thanks are also due to the Royal Geographical Society, the United Service Institution, the London Chamber of Commerce, the Royal Asiatic Society, the Zoological Society of London, and the British and Foreign Bible Society, for permission to make use of papers read before them by Colonel Stewart on various occasions, in the compilation of these memoirs. Some of these papers are re-printed in full in the appendix, others are incorporated in the body of the book.

The paper read before the London Chamber of Commerce on 'Central Asian Railway Extension' is of particular interest at the present moment, in view of the intention of the Ottoman Government to actively push forward the railway scheme for the construction of the long-proposed line from the mediterranean to Mesopotamia, a scheme which interested Colonel Stewart sufficiently that, in 1869, he travelled that way to the Persian Gulf, though he himself recommended a route much further north *viâ* the Caspian Sea to Merv and Herat, the greater part of which is already constructed. The construction of this line in Mesopotamia is part of the vast scheme recently proposed by Sir William Willcocks for the irrigation of that district, though later it may

doubtless be an important factor in any overland route to Persia and India.

The recent great increase in the use of petroleum as fuel in steamships lends interest to the paper on that subject, though, of course, some allowance must be made for lapse of time since it was written.

The map of Khorasan accompanying this volume has been largely laid down from surveys made by Colonel Stewart himself, much of that country not having been previously surveyed. For permission to re-print this and the map of the Perso-Afghan frontiers, I am indebted to the Royal Geographical Society.

The spelling of all names has been carefully verified from the two maps as far as possible, and where the same place occurs on both, but is spelt differently, that map on which Colonel Stewart's route is marked has been followed. The reader will, therefore, have no difficulty in locating the various villages and towns mentioned during Colonel Stewart's wanderings in Persia and on the Afghan frontier.

The illustration of a Persian tea-house (p. 374), and three of those facing page 214 originally appeared in *Black and White*, and the Editor has kindly allowed me to reproduce them.

BASIL STEWART.



## INTRODUCTION

THE writer of the journals from which this volume has been prepared was the eldest son of Algernon Stewart, (a nephew of Lord Galloway's), and was born in Ceylon in 1836.

His mother was a daughter of Colonel Clement who commanded the artillery in Ceylon.

He was sent home, when nine years old, to the care of his grandmother, Lady Katharine Stewart. In common with other English children born in the East he was a bi-linguist, and could to the last repeat and translate Cingalese nursery rhymes and sentences which he had learnt as a child.

His father, who saw him off from Colombo, said, "Charlie was quite happy when he got on board ship for he found a goat and at once tried to open its mouth that he might tell its age!" This was the embryo Armenian horse-dealer of thirty-five years later.

As a boy of twelve years old at Brighton he used to meet Morier and would listen, entranced, to his accounts of Persia. To the influence of Morier's conversation we may attribute somewhat at least of the charm which Persia had for him, and which, as the following pages show, never abated.

He was for some time at Marlborough school, but it was while with M. Janson, who had been tutor to the blind king of Hanover, that he became interested

in his work. M. Janson used to send out his pupils in parties to practise surveying under the direction of the two who were best at it. One party was usually under the charge of East (now Sir Cecil J. East), and the other under Stewart. From M. Janson's he passed into the army in 1854, and from that time until 1880 he did no more surveying. In that year, when staying with Colonel Everett at Erzroum, he was preparing to make the survey which furnished the map accompanying this volume, and after a lapse of twenty-six years hand and eye had not lost their cunning.

In January 1880, while we were staying at Oxford with Sir Henry Acland, the project of living in disguise on the Turkoman frontier was broached. Professor Max Müller, who had come to discuss the subject of Afghan race and language with my husband, was much interested in the proposed journey, but the general opinion was against the likelihood of success in such a hazardous undertaking.

Colonel Stewart's journey through Persia in 1866, and his having worked at Persian when on leave from his regiment, had in some measure prepared him as regards knowledge of the country and its language. There was a long distance, however, to bridge before successfully impersonating an Oriental.

This, I believe, was in great part accomplished by his intense sympathy with—and a certain adaptability to—the people amongst whom he lived.

On his return from disguise in 1881, I was startled next morning when he entered the room dressed as an Armenian. He was, of course, completely at home in that garb, and having worn it for several



months he felt at last almost as if he were an Armenian. The garments, which were such as would be worn by a prosperous merchant, were presented by Colonel Stewart to the "Home for Asiatics," the only portion retained being the silver-mounted belt.

In the journals there is but little said of his trip to the Red Sea in search of petroleum, nor is there any mention of his having found, not very far from the coast near Genneh, a quarry of blue porphyry which had formerly been worked by the Romans with slave labour, but never since that time. Some of the blocks were found cut and almost ready for transporting.

The expression "born in the purple" as denoting royalty is said to have arisen from the fact that, in the Cæsar's palace, there was at least one chamber whose walls were lined with this very blue porphyry, and in which the heir to the imperial dignity should be born.

In 1886, following on his lecture at the United Service Institution (which will be found in the appendix), the Admiralty were in communication with him in regard to fitting up some torpedo boats to burn petroleum; he was ready to follow up that work as far as time allowed, but was very soon sent out again to Persia. It will thus be seen that Colonel Stewart was something of a pioneer in the use of petroleum fuel in ships of the British navy, a use which to-day has a wide and extending application.

In 1885 Colonel Stewart was ordered to proceed from Resht to Astrabad. I had only arrived at Resht from England a fortnight previously. It would have

been easy for him to reach his destination by travelling from Resht to Gez by sea—but he had not had time to visit the intervening district which was in his consulate, so decided to ride along the southern shore of the Caspian, but as he had to swim several rivers, I was therefore unable to accompany him. Soon after reaching Astrabad he telegraphed that I might join him.

On my arrival I found that there was some tension in his relations with the Governor of the province. It was the Governor's duty to call on the Consul within a very short interval after his arrival and make enquiry as to his health, and so forth. This courtesy, which was due to him "*ex officio*," had not been rendered.

Colonel Stewart's "Mirza" was now told to inform the Governor that the consequences would be disastrous to him if he did not call at once and also send a very full apology for his negligence. At dinner that evening my husband enquired as to the result of the communication upon the Governor.

"He will call to-morrow, sir, and he is sending an apology."

"Is it a very ample one? if otherwise I will not accept it."

"It is a very ample one," replied the Mirza, "I know it is for I wrote it myself." Next morning came the apology, which was to this effect: The Governor had been extremely desirous of paying his respects and had deplored his inability to do so but "owing to a very bad pain in his stomach" he had been utterly unable to present himself before the Consul, but he would now do so without delay.

He called, and I believe that his reception, though

of course according to the most rigid Persian etiquette, was not marked by great cordiality on Colonel Stewart's side.

Children were always his friends. The British agent at Mashad, a Persian, had a six-year-old daughter who was amongst them. Colonel Stewart told her that when he returned from England, he would bring her a doll that she might see how English ladies dress. The little girl was delighted at the prospect and quite understood the necessities of the toilette. After a pause she remarked, "If you bring me a doll dressed like an English lady, you will have to bring me another doll like an English maid, to dress her." On his return he presented her with an English-lady doll and another dressed as an attendant.

During a period of leave in England, Colonel Stewart was associated with Lord Meath in forwarding the scheme for state-aided emigration. He was especially interested in helping the chain-makers at Cradley Heath, and visited them. To see the women working at furnaces in their tiny living rooms touched him, whilst one after another showed him their burnt and scarred hands, saying, "Are these such as a woman's hands should be?" He wrote a letter on the subject which was courteously inserted by the editor of *The Pall Mall Gazette*. Several hundred pounds was sent in to him as the result, and with this he was able to pay a weekly sum to the committee who assisted the chain-makers and their families who were on strike through no fault of their own.

In 1890, when Consul-General at Tabriz, he visited

Urumiah which was in his district. He had been invited to stay with an Armenian Presbyterian missionary. As he approached the town he was met by the news that the missionary's wife had been attacked by an Armenian three days previously and was dying. Colonel Stewart learnt some particulars of the event and also that no attempt had been made by the Government authorities to capture the murderer. Without a moment's delay he rode to the Governor's house, where he was informed that the official was enjoying his mid-day sleep. "Wake him up at once and tell him the British Consul-General wishes to see him." Before long the drowsy dignitary appeared. Colonel Stewart explained his errand and demanded to know what steps had been taken to follow up the offender who had attacked an Armenian subject under the protection of the British Government. "None had been taken so far," was the reply, "and at present it is too hot to attend to business."

"I wait here until you mount your horse and ride with me on the track of the assassin," rejoined Colonel Stewart, "*and* I report you to the Shah at Tehran."

There was no alternative offered, and with a bad grace the Governor mounted.

The Consul-General set the pace, and it was no laggardly one. They followed the man up for two days and traced him to the Turkish frontier across which he had taken refuge. Vigorous measures were now carried out for his capture and he was brought to justice, tried at Tabriz, convicted, and sentenced to a very long term of imprisonment at Tehran.

Persian Armenians, however, can produce money, golden keys which open even prison doors, and the term of punishment was, after a short interval, commuted.

A vast improvement, however, in the status of the Christian population of Urumiah was the result of Colonel Stewart's action, as they all readily testified. The Governor was deposed and my husband received a letter of thanks from the President of the United States.

The reader of this volume can judge for himself something of the character of the writer, and has the key enabling him to do so when he knows that Colonel Stewart's aim was to fulfil the duties which fall to a humble servant of the King of Kings.

ANNE NAIRNE STEWART.



DATES OF COMMISSIONS AND APPOINTMENTS  
HELD BY MAJOR CHARLES EDWARD STEWART.  
1854-1878.

Ensign H.M. 27th Inniskillings, 14th April, 1854.

Lieutenant H.M. 27th Inniskillings, 1st May, 1855.

Appointed Doing Duty Officer, 8th Punjab Infantry, 4th October, 1857.

Appointed Officiating Adjutant, 5th Punjab Infantry, 4th January, 1858.

Appointed Officiating Adjutant, 1st Sikh Irregular Cavalry, 10th April, 1858.

Appointed Adjutant 5th Punjab Infantry, 13th April, 1858.

Appointed Officiating 2nd in Command, 5th Punjab Infantry, 15th September, 1859.

Appointed 2nd in command, 5th Punjab Infantry, 24th December, 1862.

Appointed 2nd in Command and Wing Commander, 5th Punjab Infantry, 26th January, 1865.

Captain Bengal Staff Corps, 14th April, 1866.

Major Bengal Staff Corps, 14th April, 1874.

Twice during the period that Major C. E. Stewart has held the appointment of 2nd in Command, he has officiated as Commandant, 5th Punjab Infantry, once in 1860 for two-and-a-half months, and in 1866 for about six months, and on this latter occasion he received a letter from Brigadier-General Sir Alfred Wilde, Commanding Punjab Frontier Force, informing him that he had commanded the regiment entirely to his satisfaction during the period he held the command.

## xviii COMMISSIONS AND APPOINTMENTS HELD

### FIELD SERVICES OF MAJOR C. E. STEWART.

Served with the first Sikh Irregular Cavalry (now 11th Bengal Lancers) with the Field Force under Major-General Sir Hope Grant, near Lucknow, from the 11th April 1858, to the 12th May, 1858. Commanded the 1st Sikh Irregular Cavalry at the action of Barie, near Lucknow, and was mentioned by Sir Hope Grant in his dispatch published in G. G. O. No. 150, of 1858, in the following words, "My acknowledgments are due to the following Officers for the support they rendered me on this occasion . . . Lieut. Stewart commanding 1st Sikh Irregular Cavalry."

Served as Adjutant 5th Punjab Infantry with the column under Major-General Sir Hope Grant, against the Mutineers at the action of Simrie in Oude, on the 12th May, 1858; battle of Nawabgung, 13th June, 1858, and the passage of the Gumti River, and taking of Sultanpur, under Sir Alfred Horsford, in August, 1858.

Served as Adjutant, 5th Punjab Infantry, with the Column under Lord Clyde, against the Mutineers on the Raptie River, in December, 1858, and January, 1859.

Was appointed Staff Officer to a Field Force on the Raptie River, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel J. L. Vaughan, consisting of the following troops:—2 Guns R. H. A.; Detachment 2nd Batalion, Rifle Brigade; Wing 1st Punjab Cavalry; 5th Punjab Infantry; 2nd Jezailchie Regiment.

While holding this appointment was detached in Command of Two Companies, 5th Punjab Infantry, which made a march of forty-eight miles in one day, in the month of May, 1859, and surprised a force under Bukt Khan, who was known as the Commander-in-Chief of the rebels at Delhi, and who at this time was commanding the mutineers of the Nusurabab Brigade. Bukt Khan was surprised and killed with eighty-six of his men, and the remainder driven into Nepal. The dispatch concerning this affair is published in G. O. No. 846, of 1859, in which the following words are used, "The gallantry and exertions of all under my command merit my warmest thanks, and I am especially indebted to Lieut. Stewart for the great assistance he rendered me throughout the day."



Served on the North-West Frontier of India at the Umbeylah Pass, in 1863, under Sir Neville Chamberlain, against the Buneyr tribe. Commanded the 5th Punjab Infantry for several weeks of the campaign, and was slightly wounded. Was mentioned in Colonel Vaughan's dispatch, published in G. O. No. 76 of 1864, in the following words, "I beg to notice the assistance I received from . . . and Lieut Stewart, who commanded the 5th Punjab Infantry." At the end of the expedition Colonel Vaughan entered the following into the history of the regiment, "It would be unfair to complete the above short record of the history of the regiment during the Umbeylah Campaign without placing upon record that Lieut. C. E. Stewart, 2nd in command, was the virtual commandant of the regiment throughout the operations . . . Upon Lieut. Stewart therefore devolved all the responsibility of the regimental command."

Served in the expedition against the Jowaki Afreedis, on the North-West Frontier of India, under Brigadier-General Keyes, C. B., in 1877-8, and was mentioned by General Keyes in his dispatch published in G. O. No. 738, of 1878, in the following words, "The gallant actions performed by Major C. E. Stewart, 5th Punjab Infantry, and Lieut. G. Gaisford, on the 15th November, 1877, and Capt. D. Hawes, 4th Punjab Infantry, on the 1st December, 1877, and Capt. A. G. Hammond, Corps of Guides, on the 17th January, 1878, were described in my reports of the operations of those dates. I desire, however, to bring them again to notice in this place, I cannot speak too highly of these officers, who have distinguished themselves by their zeal and energy on all occasions. I have also to remark that Major C. E. Stewart commanded the 5th Punjab Infantry at the advance on Paiah, Jummin, Ghoriba, and throughout the operations on the Durgai Heights (on both occasions) when the command of a separate column had devolved upon the Commandant of the Regiment, he fully earned the confidence of all ranks by the coolness and skill he invariably displayed."

Was also mentioned by General Keyes in a letter to the Secretary to the Government Punjab Military Department,

## xx COMMISSIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Simla, recommending him (and one other officer) for promotion by Brevet, in the following words:—"Major C. E. Stewart, 2nd in Command 5th Punjab Infantry, did excellent service throughout the operations. He commanded a company of his Regiment which had, under my immediate orders, been detached to protect a foraging party. Major Stewart, when his company was much dispersed in broken ground while descending a hill, was suddenly attacked by a very superior body of the enemy, who had remained concealed in the rocks and jungle on the crest.

"The very great coolness and conspicuous gallantry displayed by Major Stewart on this occasion, when suddenly taken at great disadvantage, undoubtedly saved his Company from very serious loss."

Major C. E. Stewart has received the Indian Mutiny Medal and the North-West Frontier Medal, with two clasps for the Umbeylah and Jowaki Campaigns.

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## CORRIGENDA

- Page 120. 7th line from foot. *For 'Sreenuggar' read 'Srinagar.'*
- Page 124. 3rd line from foot. *For 'American-Lloyd' read 'Austrian-Lloyd'*
- Page 141. 3rd line from foot. *For 'Peshawr' read 'Peshawar.'*
- Page 154. 15th line from top. *For 'chukars' read 'chekors.'*

# THROUGH PERSIA IN DISGUISE

## PART I

### THE INDIAN MUTINY AND UMBEYLAH CAMPAIGN

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE OUTBREAK OF THE MUTINY

IN May, 1857, I was a young lieutenant in the 27th Inniskilling Fusiliers, then stationed at Naushera in the Punjab. We were the first European regiment to be stationed at the new cantonment of Naushera. Barracks had been built for the men, but no provision whatever had been made for the officers. Each officer was provided with a small plot of land (in India called a compound) in which we pitched our tents for many months, while we built a house for ourselves at our own expense. We had only arrived the previous December, and by the following May no houses had yet been completed. My tent stood about 100 yards from the Grand Trunk road which runs in a direct line from Calcutta to Peshawur on the Indian frontier, a distance of 1400 miles, and throughout the whole of its course is one of the best roads in the world. As I came out of my tent one

morning, about the 15th of May, I saw passing along the road a regiment of cavalry and infantry, which proved to be the celebrated Guide Corps, who had that morning commenced their march from their headquarters at Hoti Murdan for the siege of Delhi, where they were to make so great a name. They were on their way to join a moveable column which was then being formed in Jhelum under Sir Neville Chamberlain, and which eventually proceeded to Delhi, and this was the first day of their wonderful march there. It was from them that we heard of the outbreak of the mutiny by the native army at Meerut on the 11th of May. As the 27th Inniskilling Fusiliers had a pack of English foxhounds which hunted the country between Naushera and Hoti-Murdan, and as the officers of the Guides used to attend the meets, they were all acquaintances of ours, and we this day bid adieu to many friends, amongst them Quintin Battye, adjutant of the Guides, who fell so bravely at Delhi.

A portion of the 55th Native Infantry, one of the native regiments at Naushera, had already proceeded to Hoti-Murdan and relieved the Guides. In a few days orders came for the Inniskilling Fusiliers to proceed at once and join the moveable column under Sir Neville Chamberlain. I accompanied my regiment while my half-built house at Naushera was finished by a friend, and it had cost me a lot of money as it was built of burnt brick, which is not usual in this part of India. When I did return to Naushera in 1863, I could find no traces of my house, as it had been washed away by the Cabul river, on the bank of which the cantonment was situated.



In the great flood of the Indus, which took place about a year and a half after I had left Naushera, the Cabul river, which was also affected by it, ran back towards its source, causing such an overflow that nearly all the officers' houses were washed away. After the flood had subsided, the Public Works Department cleared the site of all remaining débris, so that no signs of my house were visible.

The 27th Inniskilling Fusiliers started on their march for Jhelum full of hopes that they would proceed finally to the siege of Delhi. We crossed the Indus at Attock, where the bridge of boats was maintained for our passage with great difficulty, the summer floods having now commenced, when the bridge is generally dismantled for the summer, otherwise there is the risk of its being washed away altogether. When the regiment reached their camp at Hassan Abdal, three marches from Rawul Pindi, orders were received stating that trouble had broken out at Peshawur, and that one wing of the Inniskilling Fusiliers was to return at once to Attock, and take possession immediately of the fort there, as the native garrison of that place was not to be trusted, and it was most important that the fort should be held by British troops. The other wing of the 27th was ordered to proceed as far as Rawul Pindi, and halt there as they might be required at Peshawur. We thus lost the chance of being present at the siege of Delhi, and with many heart burnings we turned back. I was then commanding a company of the wing proceeding to Rawul Pindi, but, as I was acting as interpreter (being the only officer present

with the regiment who spoke Hindustani fairly well), the colonel transferred me to the command of a company in the headquarters' wing, which was on its way to Attock. Colonel Kyle, who was commanding, took me with him, and we rode all the way to Attock, where we arrived late in the evening. We found that a regiment of the Punjab Frontier force (the 5th Punjab Infantry) had arrived from Kohat, and had taken possession of the fort, the garrison of which was in a more or less mutinous condition. A detachment of the 55th Native Infantry from Naushera, on the other bank of the river opposite Attock, had actually mutinied, and had refused to obey the orders of Lieutenant Lind, the Adjutant of the Punjab Infantry, who had been left on the other bank of the Indus with a small guard of the 5th Punjab Infantry. When the rest of his regiment had crossed over, Lieutenant Lind, finding that a detachment belonging to various regiments from Peshawur were trying to persuade his Punjabis to join them in mutiny, attempted to disarm them, but, as he had only a very few men (I think less than a dozen), the mutineers refused to deliver up their arms, and marched off to join their regiment at Naushera. Lieutenant Lind followed them with his handful of men, and having obtained the services of a mounted policeman from one of the police forts on the road, sent him on to the officer commanding the troops at Naushera, with a letter detailing what had occurred, and suggesting that a party of cavalry should be sent out from Naushera to stop and disarm the mutineers. This was done, and the detachment of the 55th N.I. (whom they stopped on the road)

were marched as prisoners into Naushera, but their regimental comrades of the 55th turning out, fired a volley and rescued them.

There was still a small detachment of the 27th Inniskillings left at Naushera, consisting of some twenty-seven men, most of whom had been sick in hospital when the regiment marched away, together with all the women and children belonging to the regiment. Lieutenant Davies, the officer in command of this detachment, finding that the 55th Native Infantry, in proximity to his barracks, was in open mutiny, and that the irregular cavalry regiment was also believed to have joined them (having wounded Captain Law, one of their own officers), assembled all the women and children in one of the barracks and prepared to defend them, as it was reported that the mutineers were about to attack them, and massacre the few Europeans left in the place. However, the mutineers of the 55th N.I. eventually went off to Hoti-Mardan to join the headquarters of their regiment. Colonel Kyle, Colonel Vaughan, and myself were at Attock, when an English traveller from Peshawur on his way down country, arrived at the dak-bungalow and informed us of what was occurring at Naushera as he passed through, and that the women and children were momentarily expecting an attack from the mutineers. He stated that he had managed to pass through Naushera by the Grand Trunk road, and had been asked to give the news to any officer commanding at Attock. When we received this news we were very much excited by it. The wing of the 27th was still one march away on the Rawul Pindi side of Attock,

of the 55th Native Infantry at Hoti-Mardan (with the exception of a few who were tried and shot at that place) were taken to Peshawur, and the fort of Hoti-Mardan was garrisoned by the 5th Punjab Infantry.

## CHAPTER II

### SUPPRESSION OF THE MUTINY AT PESHAWUR

AFTER a short time, the headquarters' wing of the 27th at the fort of Attock was ordered to Peshawur; the wing of that regiment which had been at Rawul Pindi being moved up to Attock to take its place. I went with the headquarters' wing to Peshawur. On our arrival three companies of this wing were accommodated in a portion of the barracks of the 70th regiment, while the two other companies occupied a large building, which was rented for them, between the city of Peshawur and the cantonments.

Not long after our arrival at Peshawur, a native officer and eleven men of the 64th N.I., one of the many regiments that had been disarmed at Peshawur, were hanged, at a parade of the whole garrison, for mutiny and desertion. It was necessary to make a severe example when there were so many disarmed regiments, several of whom were on the very verge of mutiny, while the majority of them were known to be ready to escape over the border, which was only some seven miles distant.

The Afghans across the frontier behaved well, and

brought in as prisoners all Hindustanis who had deserted, whether with or without arms. Thirty rupees each were paid for all unarmed deserters, and fifty rupees each for all armed men. Many recruits poured down from the Afghan hills to the new Punjab regiments which were being raised to replace the mutinous Hindustanis. The duties of the European garrison were heavy, as we had only H.M.'s 87th and 70th regiments, besides the wing of the 27th Inniskilling Fusiliers and some European artillery, to keep order over a large body of disarmed and mutinous soldiery.

The three men at the head of affairs who showed themselves thoroughly equal to the occasion, Sir Herbert Edwardes, the Commissioner at Peshawur, Colonel John Nicholson, the Deputy Commissioner, whose name among the natives was a host in itself, and Sir Sydney Cotton, the Brigadier-General Commanding, were none of them men to allow mutineers any latitude. The whole force at Peshawur was formed into two brigades, and a Brigadier-General appointed to each, subordinate to Sir Sydney Cotton, with power to confirm the sentence of a drumhead general court martial without further reference to higher authority, so that any attempt at mutiny could be met on the spot and suppressed without delay.

Some mutineers of the 55th N.I. were brought in from Hoti-Mardan, and forty of them were sentenced to be blown from guns. A parade of the whole garrison was ordered, and the sentence carried out. Each British regiment was divided into two weak battalions, so as to give, if necessary, the greatest

extent of British fire, while the whole of the mutinous troops, numbering some 8,000, were drawn up on the parade ground to be spectators of the execution, with the British regiments interspersed amongst them. The forty men condemned to death were brought out in batches of ten, and were placed with their backs against the muzzle of a field-gun. Their elbows were then lightly tied to the wheels of the gun, no word of command was given by the officer to the artillery detachment, but the gunners knew that when he raised his sword arm, they were to fire. This was done to save the men who were to be shot from hearing the word of command. I think this form of death was much more merciful than the alternative of either hanging or shooting, the charge of blank powder in the gun instantaneously breaking the body into some four pieces. This process was repeated with each batch of ten men until the whole forty had been executed. People may say that it was a cruel execution, but it was a necessity, and everyone felt that the sternest discipline was required to repress every and any attempt to rise on the part of so large a body of mutinous troops who had to be coerced by a comparatively small number of Europeans, while any vacillation or weakness shown by our chiefs would have precipitated a rising. If Peshawur were not firmly held, the Punjab would have gone also, and it would have been impossible for our small force fighting before Delhi to have taken that town, against which Sir John Lawrence was pouring down every available man, denuding his own province, the Punjab, of all troops, except at a few very important

points, like Peshawur, where they were urgently needed. His lieutenants at Peshawur were nobly seconding his efforts, raising new Punjab regiments and levies of irregular horse, and hurrying them towards Delhi. In many cases tribes and levies of horse were sent down even before they could be provided with a uniform or weapons, taking their own native clothes and arms, and marching off for Delhi with their tribal chiefs as native officers. The one or two English officers who went with these levies had a very difficult task in reducing to some sort of discipline these wild spirits from the Afghan frontier. An officer of one of these mounted levies informed me that in his first action at Nujjuf Gurh, near Delhi, his men having no distinguishing mark he mistook a native officer of the enemy's cavalry for one of his own men, rode up to him and said, "Bravo, young fellow, you are doing well!" The young fellow replied with an opprobrious epithet, and rode at him; the officer tried to stop him with his revolver, but the revolver jammed and would not fire. He then threw it in the man's face, and he was stopped for a few seconds by the blow, when another English officer came up and cut him down. The lack of a distinguishing uniform in that case very nearly led to a catastrophe as far as my friend was concerned.

To those of us who remained at Peshawur it was very trying to hear of the fighting going on down country, and not to be ourselves engaged even in the minor operations of war. The heat was very great, and as the autumn advanced the Peshawur fever, which always takes a heavy toll from regiments



newly arrived at Peshawur, laid low a very large number of our young soldiers, and the men were so constantly on guard or picket duty, that when they came out of the hospital and were only convalescent from fever, they had to be put on duty again. I was at this time, in consequence of the scarcity of officers, acting as orderly subaltern for about a month, and one of my duties was to visit the hospital daily, and command a funeral party who took down three or four of our dead comrades to the burial-ground.

The 64th regiment of Native Infantry, who had been very doubtful for some time and who occupied the native lines next to us, were ordered to encamp on their parade ground, and give over their lines to one of the new Punjab regiments in process of being formed, and it was also ordered that the effects of the Sepoys in the 64th should be thoroughly searched for concealed arms. On a certain day notice was sent to the three European regiments to be very much on the alert that day, as this regiment was expected to seize the opportunity and break into mutiny. We of the Inniskillings were the nearest Europeans to the 64th N.I. and we all, officers and men, sat on our beds from five o'clock in the morning, fully accoutred with a loaded rifle in our hands, ready to rush out at a moment's notice. All remained quiet till about noon, when suddenly there was a great shouting and some shots rang out. We rushed out as fast as we could, the distance being only about a hundred yards, and saw that the batches of the 64th N.I. who had been brought up from their camp at the parade ground to the lines now occupied by the new Punjab regiment, had suddenly broken into

he probably escaped with his life. The desired result had been attained, and the most mutinous regiment of the Peshawur garrison had, with about thirty exceptions, been wiped out. The rest of the mutineers were thoroughly cowed, and no further attempt at mutiny was made by the troops at that place.

Peshawur fever of a very virulent type was making sad havoc among the young soldiers of the 27th Inniskillings. Colonel Kyle, our beloved commanding officer, who was acting as one of the Brigadier-Generals appointed at Peshawur, took the fever and died, regretted by everyone who had known him. He was a man that, if he had lived, would have made a name for himself.

About this period a sudden order came to the effect that one officer and thirty men were to be placed as a picket over the artillery horses, as an attempt would be made that night on them. I was detailed for this duty, and took down thirty men with me. It was late when we started, and my servants, who were to bring me some food and bedding, could not find the place. A tent and bedding were sent for the men, but no provision was made for an officer. As the tent was very crowded I could not occupy it, being one that was usually only intended for twelve men, but it had already thirty in it. The night proved very wet and rainy, and, having neither shelter nor great coat, I had to pass a very uncomfortable night in a linen uniform. Close to the tent of my men was a sergeant-major's vacant bungalow, but it was locked up. I took refuge in the narrow verandah,

but even here the rain beat in a good deal, and I got wet. One of my servants, who had plenty of bedding and a place in the tent, kindly lent me his great coat, but I was already wet. As a result of this night's picket duty I had a bad attack of Peshawur fever from which I suffered, on and off, for some months. During this autumn I was sent down to Naushera to take command of a small detachment of the 27th which was stationed there. I was glad to get out of Peshawur, even for a short time, but I found the ride of twenty-seven miles to Naushera rather trying in my weak state. But it was a relief to get off the constant duty at Peshawur, and Naushera was a far more healthy place. Before very long my detachment was recalled to Peshawur, and I went with it. While at Naushera, I made the acquaintance of Lieutenant Brownlow, (afterwards General Sir Charles Brownlow) who was raising the 20th Punjab Infantry. As a nucleus of the new regiment he received four weak companies from the 4th P.I., and four from the 5th P.I.

After my return to Peshawur, I was, through the kindly influence of Sir Herbert Edwardes, appointed to Lieutenant Brownlow's Punjab regiment, and soon afterwards, the wing of the 27th Inniskilling Fusiliers from Attock having rejoined the headquarters at Peshawur with a good many officers, I was allowed to join the Punjab regiment at Naushera, where I still continued to suffer from the effects of the fever which I had contracted in Peshawur.

In January, 1858, the 5th Punjab Infantry passed through Naushera on its way to the siege of Luck-

now. Finding that Colonel Vaughan, who commanded it, had only one British officer besides himself present with the regiment, I applied to be appointed Adjutant, and was gazetted to it. I could not join the 5th P.I. until my name appeared in the Gazette, and in the meantime I was sent to Attock to command a detachment of the 20th P.I. stationed in the fort there.

A few days after my arrival at Attock, the Gazette appeared appointing me to the 5th P.I., and I started to overtake them, which I succeeded in doing at Rawul Pindi. The attacks of Peshawur fever still occasionally returned, which I found very inconvenient on the line of march, so one evening I took a sort of "kill or cure" dose of quinine, swallowing a large dessert spoonful, hoping it would prevent a return of the fever. At 3 o'clock in the morning when the *reveille* sounded for the march, I was found quite insensible, and it was impossible to wake me, so I was carried in a hospital litter to the next camp, where I recovered consciousness at 8 o'clock in the morning. But this overdose of quinine had its desired effect, and I had no return of fever for about three months.

The 5th Punjab Infantry marched to Meerut, where we were halted for a month very much against our will, and then ordered to continue our march to Lucknow. This halt was most unfortunate, as it caused us to arrive at Lucknow a few days after it was taken, though we came in for the fighting outside the town. We had an uneventful march to Cawnpore, where of course we visited the entrenchments where the English garrison had held

out, and the well where the numerous bodies of ladies and children who had been massacred had been thrown. We were told at the time that many of these bodies had been thrown in before life was extinct. We hurried on to Lucknow, where we arrived on the 2nd April to find that city in possession of our troops.

## CHAPTER III

### ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS

I HAD been appointed to the 5th P. I. as Adjutant in place of Lieutenant Stone, an officer who had been on his way to join that regiment, and who was supposed to have been killed at Cawnpore. On our arrival at Lucknow, he walked into our camp and claimed his appointment. He had, apparently, not been killed at Cawnpore, but had joined some volunteer cavalry at Allahabad, and had come with them to Lucknow. He had never written to inform anybody of what had happened him, and as he was supposed to have been killed his place was filled up. I was much disappointed at losing my position in the 5th P.I. just as there was a chance of seeing service in Oude, as I feared I should be sent back to join the 27th Inniskilling Fusiliers.

I went and called upon Captain the Hon. Algernon Chichester, a cousin of mine, who was at this moment in command of the 1st Seikh Irregular Cavalry, afterwards so celebrated as Probyn's Horse, and which later became the 11th Bengal Lancers. I told him my story. He replied, "Major Whale, our Commandant, was killed a few days ago, the Adjutant

was wounded, and I should be very glad to get you as Adjutant; I will go and see Sir Hope Grant" (the General who at the time commanded the Division). The same day I appeared in Division Orders to act as Adjutant of the 1st Sikh Irregular Cavalry until confirmed in General Orders, and transferred my tent from the camp of the 5th P.I. to that of the 1st Sikh Irregular Cavalry. The next day we marched with the column which proceeded to attack a large body of mutineers at the village of Baree. On the second day after leaving Lucknow, Capt. Chichester became very ill with smallpox, and I, being the senior lieutenant present with the regiment, had to command it for a time. There were several lieutenants in the regiments who had been much longer in the army, but I was senior to them all as lieutenant. On the march that day, which was the 11th of April, our advance guard, part of which consisted of a troop of my regiment, was attacked, and Lieutenant Prendergast, who commanded the troops was wounded, but not severely. Later in the morning, the village of Baree, which was full of mutineers, was seen and was attacked by the infantry, while the cavalry, which consisted of the 1st Sikh Irregular Cavalry, the 7th Hussars, and a squadron of Hodgson's Horse, were drawn up on the right flank of the village. I saw in the distance three large bodies of the enemy's cavalry galloping down towards us. They looked well, as they were clothed in different coloured uniforms. The Brigadier-General commanding the cavalry, who was the Colonel of the 7th Hussars, ordered me to throw out a troop to skirmish, and at

the same time brought up, and placed in line with us, a troop of Horse Artillery, and ordered them to open fire with shrapnel on the advancing enemy. I should think they were about 1600 yards off when the first shots were fired by the artillery. It was very pretty to watch through a field glass the effect of the shrapnel, which was seen to burst amongst the advancing troopers, who, after the first discharge, continued to advance, but at the second round I could see they were much shaken, and when they received a third lot of shrapnel, they went "threes about," and disappeared at a gallop. Our cavalry went in pursuit, but only overtook a few stragglers. The infantry in the meantime had cleared the village, and the whole force advanced. After clearing the country about that part of Oude of mutineers we returned to Lucknow, when a new column was formed, most of the European troops being changed.

After a month and a day as Adjutant of the 1st Seikh Irregular Cavalry, I was reinstated by General Order in my appointment as Adjutant of the 5th P.I. I had applied for this post, as, being an infantry officer, I preferred serving with infantry, and transferred my tent from the camp of the 1st Seikh Irregular Cavalry to that of the 5th P.I. When the despatches referring to the affair at Baree appeared in the Gazette, my name was shown amongst the commanding officers thanked for their services in this action. I was very glad, being only 22 years old, to have commanded a regiment in action. During the whole of that hot season we marched about Oude, having repeated brushes with the enemy.

Shortly before I left the 1st Seikh Irregular



Cavalry, I was sent out with 100 troopers to guard a party of Engineers about to blow up a small Hindu temple on the banks of the Ganges, where a boatload of our people from Cawnpore had the previous year run aground. The men of the party numbering, I believe, sixteen, had charged the villagers who had attacked the boat, driving them back, but were unable to return to the boat where the ladies and children had been left. The men took refuge temporarily in a temple, which the villagers surrounded with brushwood and set on fire. Being forced to vacate the temple, they tried to get back to the boat, which in the meantime had been removed by the villagers. The men were, I believe, all killed in their attempts to get back to the boat, except six, who swam out in the Ganges. Two of these were drowned and four escaped, the only survivors of the garrison of Cawnpore. The boatload of ladies and children were seized by the villagers and delivered over to the Nana by whom they were massacred.

As I approached the village, I begged the civil officer, under whose orders I had been placed, to allow me to surround the village with my cavalry, as we were to arrest the four head-men. The civil officer kept saying "Not yet, not yet," and only allowed me to surround it when we were close up to it, but it was then too late. One head-man was arrested, tried, and hanged the next day, but the others had fled. When I got to the far side of the village, I heard that two of the head-men had just passed well mounted. I sent back my native officer to tell the civil officer that I had taken fourteen men, and had gone in hot pursuit

of the two head-men of the village who had escaped. I never caught sight of them, as they had too long a start, but we went on as hard as we could gallop a great many miles until I had out-riden all my men except one.

At last we came to another village, where I supposed the fugitives had taken refuge. However, I sent my sole remaining trooper to a ferry over the Ganges, said to be about a mile off, and where I thought the fugitives might have crossed, while I myself waited patiently outside this village until some of my troopers, who had evidently lost all trace of me, should come up. The first to return was the trooper whom I had sent to the ferry, and he came back very quickly. Just at this time two men, whom I think were grooms, came out of the village riding two good horses, which were rather hot. The grooms were evidently taking them to water. My trooper and I galloped towards the grooms, but when we overtook them, they jumped off their horses which we seized, and took refuge in the village. I was riding a vicious horse who was a rather celebrated rearer, and used to fall back with me when he was rearing. A free fight soon commenced between my horse and the one I had seized, and at last I was forced to let go, and the horse galloped back into the village. A man presently came out who professed to be friendly to the British, and warned me that there was a picket of twelve men of the enemy's cavalry in the village, and that there was a large camp of them a mile or two beyond. By this time some of my troopers had come up and joined me. I had a

good look at the village which appeared to be a strongly fortified one, and as I felt I, with but fourteen troopers, could do nothing against a fortified village, I decided to return to camp. I did not go back to the village from whence I had started, as we were about the same distance from our own camp as we were from it, and I felt little doubt that the party there, after blowing up the temple, had returned with my native officer and eighty-four men to camp. When I got back to camp, I reported myself to my commanding officer, Captain Chichester, who said General Sir Hope Grant had sent several messages enquiring for me, as it was reported that I had been cut off, and he had received orders that I should proceed at once on my return to see him (Sir H. Grant). It appeared that he had known that there was a considerable body of the enemy in the direction I had gone, and evidently thought I had somewhat recklessly exposed myself and my small party of men. I proceeded to the general's tent and reported myself. Sir Hope Grant met me, shook hands and said, "I am glad to see you have got back. I am going to give you a 'wiggling,' but before you have it you had better sit down and have some dinner." It was about 9 o'clock in the evening and they were just finishing their dinner. It appeared that the party I had been with had remained out expecting my return; but a message was immediately sent them to return to camp, as soon as I had come safely back. After dinner, Sir Hope Grant laughed and said to me, "We will say nothing about the 'wiggling,'" and I could see he was not displeased with me, of which I was glad, as

I had the greatest admiration for Sir Hope Grant, from whom and from Lady Grant I had received much kindness.

Soon after I had rejoined the 5th P.I., I had a return attack of Peshawur fever. I sent for the doctor, who said, "You have a sharp attack." It happened to be about eleven o'clock on a very hot day in May, and the doctor had only just left my tent when the alarm bugle sounded all over the camp. I rushed out, mounted my horse, fell in the regiment, and made it over to the commanding officer, Colonel Vaughan. We were directed to take up a position in the rear of the camp, where the enemy had been seen, but it proved to be more or less a false alarm. A few men of my regiment, who were without arms, had been bathing just outside the pickets, when a small party of the enemy's cavalry had swooped down upon them, wounding one of the men who was in the water, and cutting off several fingers of his right hand. The bathers had run into camp, thus causing the alarm. Just as we got into the position told off for us to guard, I, being in a burning fever at the time and the sun very hot, had a touch of sun-stroke and was carried insensible into the hospital tent of the British regiment just near. It was fortunate for me that this hospital tent was so near, and I received every attention, men being ready with goatskins full of water to pour on to the head of anyone brought in insensible from the sun. At one of our camping grounds where we had been a few days before, we buried forty-seven Europeans who had died of sunstroke.

A few days previous to this alarm, we had had a small fight at a place named Simrie. We had marched out at three p.m. to meet the enemy, and after a smart little fight we drove them off and captured two of their guns. It was then too late and too dark to return to our camp, which was a good many miles off, so we bivouacked in a corner of the ground where the skirmish had taken place. It happened to be a very dark night, and though I believe there was no enemy in our immediate neighbourhood, a panic occurred during the night. I think it was caused by some commissariat elephants breaking loose and running over the sleeping men, who were very tired from a hard and hot day's work. A free fight took place amongst our own men, many of them clubbing their muskets and attacking one another with the butts. In a very short time order was restored, but we had one officer wounded in the foot with a revolver shot, and twelve men slightly wounded with clubbed muskets before the alarm was discovered to be a false one. In the morning we marched back to camp, and found that the two guns which we had taken the evening before and left on the field, had been removed by the enemy during the night. Soon after this, we all returned to Lucknow, and most of the European regiments were placed in garrison there, and a new column formed of fresh troops. The 7th Hussars, the 2nd battalion of the Rifle Brigade, and the 5th P.I. were not relieved by fresh troops but always formed part of the new column, which moved about restoring order in this part of Oude.

I was left in the Begum Koti at Lucknow when

the new column moved out, as I was very ill in the hospital with fever for twenty days. The officer who occupied the same room in the hospital as myself was Captain Burroughs, of the 93rd Highlanders, who had been severely wounded by an explosion at the taking of Lucknow, and was still suffering from its effects.

On the next return of the movable column, some twenty days after they had left, I, though still very weak from fever, rejoined my regiment. A fresh column was again formed, and we proceeded to a place named Nawab Gunge, where we arrived on the 20th of June, 1858. A large body of mutineers was found assembled here, and a fight took place, in which the enemy were defeated with the loss of about 700 men. In this fight the 5th P.I. was employed, and they charged and captured two of the enemy's guns. It was curious to observe the immense number of vultures and adjutants (also a carrion-eating bird) which appeared on the scene of action as soon as the troops had left. We formed a standing camp at Nawab Gunge, and remained there for many weeks, as very heavy rains were falling at this period.

## CHAPTER IV

### A SKIRMISH WITH MUTINEERS

WHILE in camp at Nawab Gunge, some of the officers and men of the 5th P.I. built huts for themselves, or put a thatch over their tents, but I contented myself with pitching my tent on a small raised platform, the top of which I covered with pounded brick beaten hard, so as to raise myself above the flood-water of the heavy rain. After a considerable halt at Nawab Gunge, orders were received for the column to proceed to Fyzabad, and on our arrival there, a large Mahommedan tomb, with many buildings about it, was made over as quarters for my regiment. Here we remained for some weeks, and were then ordered to Sultanpur on the Goomtie river, where a large body of the enemy was assembled. When we arrived within one march of Sultanpur, we heard that the enemy had withdrawn to the further bank of the river, where the old military cantonment of Sultanpur was situated, having abandoned the town of Sultanpur which was on our side of the river. When we approached the Goomtie river, two companies of my regiment were sent out to skirmish, and extended along the river bank. The

enemy kept up a heavy fire from musketry and from a battery of artillery posted on the high bank opposite. The distance, however, was too great for an effective infantry fire, and the enemy wasted a good deal of ammunition. After much firing on both sides with little effect, we posted strong pickets along the river bank, retired about 1,000 yards, and pitched our camp. The rest of the force had already pitched their camp about a mile to the rear of ours. I saw to-day for the first time shells of native manufacture which had been fired at us. They appeared to be made of pewter, and though they did explode, they never seemed to do so in the right place, and were certainly not very effective. We got into our camp in time for a late lunch, which was a most lively one, for though the enemy could not do much with their shells, they soon got the range of our tents very well, and sent their round shots right through them, which, as they were crowded with men, was far from pleasant. A very small sum, amounting to about tenpence per month, was allowed to the quarter-master of the regiment for the repair of each tent, and it took several months' allowance to repair the rents made in them that day. It was rather hard upon the officer who performed the duties of quarter-master, as the Government allowance did not pay for half the damage done. It was our canvas, however, that chiefly suffered, as our men quickly evacuated the tents, and the only person killed was one poor old woman connected with the regimental bazaar, and two men were wounded. Soon after, orders were received to leave our camp



and take possession of the empty houses in the town of Sultanpur, which had been entirely abandoned by the inhabitants, and to plunder it. This was a very useless order, as our men on searching it only found a pound of onions, which one individual was fortunate enough to discover.

The Goomtie river at Sultanpur was about sixty yards wide with a rather rapid current and quite unfordable at any point. There had been originally a bridge of boats at Sultanpur, but the enemy had withdrawn the boats to their bank of the river and placed a strong guard over them. We thought that the boats were probably still afloat in the water, and I and one Sikh soldier of my regiment volunteered to swim across as soon as it was dark and cut them adrift. I rode down that evening before it was dark to our picket at the point opposite which the boats were supposed to be to try and get a view of them, but I only succeeded in drawing a very hot musketry fire on myself. The enemy, however, were not armed with the modern rifle, or the result would probably have been different. As soon as it was dark, I returned to the same picket, and then crept with one man to the bank of the river. Here I met with a great disappointment. We had been told the enemy had removed the boats, and it was thought they had moored them on their own side of the river, so that if someone could swim across and cut them adrift, the strong current would have brought some of them over to our bank, but the enemy had evidently anticipated such an attempt being made as they had dragged the big boats out of the water, and placed them high and dry on the river bank, and

it would require some sixty or seventy men for each boat to get them down into the water again. As there were several thousand of the enemy close by the boats on the bank my plan had therefore to be given up, and our force remained encamped for many weeks at Sultanpur, unable to get across the river. But time was not being lost, as the engineers unroofed some of the houses in the town of Sultanpur, and made the platforms necessary for a bridge of boats to be thrown across the river, whenever we could get the necessary boats. In the meantime great search was made for canoes. Two were procured, I do not know exactly where, and a third was discovered by one of my men sunk in a creek of the river. These were made over to the engineers, who, by joining two together and putting a deck on them, made them fit to take across some twenty men at a time. A rope was carried across the river by an engineer officer and some five or six sappers opposite the old town of Sultanpur, some two miles above the place where it was proposed the bridge of boats should be. I also crossed with a Corporal and four men of my regiment to guard the sappers while they were working. I threw out my small guard several hundred yards in advance of where the sappers were endeavouring to tighten the rope that had been carried over, but it was all in vain. Having no capstan, the rope could not be tightened enough in the middle to be of any use, and it sagged well under the water. When this plan had to be given up, thirty men of the 5th P.I. volunteered to swim over, and placing their arms and accoutrements on a small raft made by the engineers out of empty rum

casks, they swam over, guiding the raft alongside as they went, when they took up a position to cover the crossing of a part of the force by canoes. In the course of that day, the 5th P.I., the 1st Madras Fusiliers, and two guns were brought over in the canoes which had been joined together by the engineers, and a position was taken up by this force across the neck of a peninsula having the river on its two sides.

We remained several days in this position, which was a strong one, as our flanks were defended by the river, and our tents were pitched below a sort of terrace, which hid them from view of the enemy, while we held the terrace with strong pickets. Every night these pickets were attacked by considerable bodies of the enemy, but beyond occasionally reinforcing our pickets when the enemy's fire became heavy, those encamped just below the terrace had a tolerably quiet night's rest. Every day and all day long small parties of our troops were brought over by the sappers in the two canoes, but the process was a very slow one. A camp was formed of these troops a little distance to our rear. After this had gone on for several days, I observed that the enemy were more on the alert, and more active one afternoon than usual. Colonel Vaughan had proceeded to a council of war held at the general's tent which was now on our bank of the river. Captain Hoste and myself took out a company of the 5th P.I., collected our pickets together, and with them thus reinforced we attacked the enemy and drove them back with considerable loss.

When the men of the 1st Madras Fusiliers saw

this they gave us a cheer. Later, when the commanding officers had returned from the Council, the Madras Fusiliers and 5th P.I. advanced for more than a mile against the enemy and drove them still further back. We met with very little opposition, but as it soon grew dark, and was a very dark night, we found our way back to the camp with considerable difficulty, as the whole of the ground was cut up by ravines. The canoes were kept at work all that night taking troops over the river, and at last a considerable portion of the moveable column had been got over. The horses of the 7th Hussars proved a difficulty, as they were too big to be taken into the canoes, and there was no possible ford within many miles. Volunteers from the 5th P.I. were asked to swim their horses over. Sixty good swimmers volunteered, and I took them down to the river, and these men then proceeded to swim 700 of their horses over the stream. Some six or seven horses were drowned in the operation. The baggage mules were swum over by their drivers, but our chief difficulty was in getting our camels across. A place was found where the deep part of the river was comparatively narrow, and the camels with their long legs were able to wade over a considerable portion of the distance. Each camel had attached on either side of him a large skin receptacle called a "dubba," in which clarified butter is carried for the native soldiers' rations. These were emptied and secured to the camels in such a manner as to help the floating beast while three or four good swimmers kept them in their proper course. The camels were with much difficulty forced over the

narrow portion of the river which was out of their depth. But camels are ordinarily very bad swimmers, and two of them were drowned in the attempt and only a few were got over by swimming, as most of them refused to cross until we had captured the boats and built a bridge.

Very early one morning, before it was light, an advance was commenced to the point where the enemy had concentrated in the old civil station at Sultanpur. A heavy elephant battery had been left by us on the far bank of the river, as it was quite impossible to bring their heavy guns over in canoes. They had been placed on a high position from whence they had a good view of our side of the river, and could sweep it, if necessary, with a heavy fire. They had received orders to open fire on the enemy on our side of the river at daylight. The enemy, when they discovered we really meant to advance, evacuated not only our front but also the station at Sultanpur, with the result that, when the first troops of our advancing column appeared, the battery, mistaking us for the enemy, opened fire on the skirmishers of the 5th P.I. and the 1st Madras Fusiliers, which were the two leading regiments of the advance. The shells exploded among the skirmishers, covering several men with dust, but fortunately hurting nobody. Before any more could be fired, the buglers sounded the cease fire with all their might. We that morning entered the civil station at Cawnpore, and my regiment was quartered in the empty houses of the Sudder bazaar, and the rest of the force encamped close by. The large boats on the banks of the river were captured, and the engineers who had

all the platforms ready made, very soon constructed a bridge of boats over the river close to our camp. After this there was a considerable pause in the campaign, the enemy, it was reported, being occupied quarrelling amongst themselves. Other columns were acting, and the country was quieting down, while several small columns were sent in different directions from Sultanpur, one of which I accompanied in command of three companies of the 5th P.I. Several skirmishes took place with the various columns in the neighbourhood of Sultanpur. Amongst the prisoners taken by the column which I happened to accompany, was a man who admitted he had been Tehsildar to the Nana of Cawnpore, when the latter had massacred a boatload of ladies and children who were captured by some villagers as they were escaping down the Ganges (see ch. 3). This man was tried and sentenced to be hanged, the sentence being carried out in the presence of the whole column. The mutineers were allowed to surrender, and did so in great numbers, when they were sent to their homes, unless the murder of English people was proved against them, as in the case of the Tehsildar of Cawnpore.

One of the principal nobles of Oude who had not as yet surrendered and made peace, was the Taluqdar, Man Singh, against whom Sir Hope Grant proceeded. He was a powerful chief and possessed a strong fort. We hoped we might have had a good fight in capturing his fort, but his troops had no stomach for fighting, and though they opened fire from the fort when we approached it, they evacuated it during the night, and Man Singh made terms with the authorities,

and had his vast estates restored to him. In the neighbourhood of this chief's fortress was the home of one of my "subadars" or native captains of my regiment, named Man Khan, who, though an Oude man, had behaved splendidly throughout the mutiny, and had led his company, which was composed of Punjabis, well in every action. He was a well-to-do land-owner in this neighbourhood, and as his home was near to our camp, I went to see it. Though a good substantial native house, it was quite empty, as everything in the way of furniture, some tons of rice and wheat, carts, cattle, etc., had been removed by a neighbouring land-owner to whom they had been given by Man Singh, the Taluqdar, on the ground that the subadar was fighting on the British side, and had therefore forfeited everything he possessed. I called upon and had an interview with the land-owner in question, and explained very forcibly that he had much better return the subadar's property which he had taken, or else it would be awkward for him were it proved that he had openly plundered a native officer on the ground that the latter had forfeited his right to everything because he had fought for the British. The zemindar thoroughly saw the force of my argument, and consented to restore all the property he had taken, swearing on Ganges water that he would keep his promise. As I went the next day to quite a different part of Oude, I did not feel at all certain that the man would carry out his promise to me; but he did so to the fullest extent, even supplying carts to carry back the grain and rice, and I heard afterwards from Man Khan, our subadar, that both he and the

Taluqdar, Man Singh, had afterwards treated him with great consideration.

After this, the 5th P.I. was detailed to join a column which was assembled on the far side of the Gogari river, under the Commander-in-chief, Sir Colin Campbell. The mutineers had by this time (the end of 1858) been cleared out of Oude by the various columns acting in that country and were concentrated to the number, it was said, of 70,000 on the far side of the Gogari river, but many of these were women and children. A number of small columns now proceeded, under the personal superintendence of the Commander-in-chief, to drive these mutineers into the Nepal Terai, a wide belt of heavy jungle, skirting the foot of the Himalayas for some hundreds of miles, and varying from about twenty to forty miles in width. Finally these mutineers either surrendered or were driven into this jungle.

Colonel Vaughan, my commanding officer, held the command of one of these small columns on the Rapti river, at a place called Sidhunia Ghat. This column at first consisted of two companies of the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, two guns of Artillery, the 1st Punjab Cavalry, and the 5th P.I. Later when the Europeans were withdrawn, a regiment of Jezailchies from the Khyber Pass was sent to replace them. These were one of the levies I have spoken of before as raised at Peshawur and sent down country without uniform, armed with jezails, as their own native rifles were called. They had only one British officer to command them, the rest were all natives, and most useful they proved in the mutiny. This particular regiment was known as Millet's



Jezailchies from the name of their commanding officer, Captain Millet.

We remained at Sidhunia Ghat many months, making constant raids into the forest of the Terai whenever we heard of the assembly of a party of mutineers. Here and there individuals managed to escape through the cordon, and get away to their homes, but no large body of men could get through. During the time we were here, Colonel Vaughan arranged a smart little raid upon a party of the enemy who had come down to the neighbourhood of a village in the Terai, about twenty four miles from our camp, and were trying to obtain food from the village.

Starting about 3 A.M. one morning with two companies of the 5th P.I. I was sent to this village, and it was arranged that Captain Millet should proceed to a place several miles lower down the Rapti river, where two companies of his Jezailchies were stationed considerably nearer our destination. It was further arranged that he should bring these two companies and that we should rendez-vous near the village where the mutineers were said to be, and then proceed against them in company.

About 12 o'clock, when I reached the village, I saw Captain Millet and his men, appearing from another direction, who joined our party after obtaining information as to the exact whereabouts of the enemy, which was said to be posted some two or three miles off in a thick forest. We hurried on as quickly as we could, having a company of skirmishers out in order to surprise the enemy. Unfortunately we met two troopers of the enemy's cavalry, who were coming to the village to get food,

believed both at the time and since, that the report of the death of the Nana from fever in the Terai was a true one, and that the rumours circulated in India some time afterwards of his being alive were false.

The Nepaulese at last made some sort of a show of driving the mutineers out of the Nepaul territory, and constant petty raids were made upon them whenever they approached that part of the Terai which was within British territory. Our own troops, who were encamped in a more healthy country just outside the edge of the forest, suffered much from fever, but our condition was better than that of the mutineers whom we kept within the forest.

At last the mutineers lost all hope, death and disease having worked great havoc among them. Terms of surrender were again offered them, and great numbers gave themselves up at the different camps guarding the frontier. Between 600 and 700 surrendered themselves at our camp. Their arms were taken from them, and they were given one rupee each to buy food, and allowed to proceed to their homes. I do not think the estimate of 70,000 men and women, which was made the year before when we drove the mutineers into the Terai, was an excessive one. There was always a dribble of individuals who escaped back between the columns to their homes through the Oude villages, but the numbers that perished in the jungle were very great. I doubt whether more than a tithe had returned to their homes. I would here refer to the rumour that a European had been present with the mutineers of the Nuseerabad Brigade, part of which brigade

surrendered to our camp, while some of them had been present at the attack made on them in the jungle by Captain Millet and myself, when Bakht Khan, the Commander-in-Chief at Delhi, was killed. I did not at this time hear of the presence of any European with the mutineers in the Terai. There had, of course, been a European sergeant-major of artillery present with the mutineers in Delhi, and the same man was, I heard, at the fort of Roya in the attack of which a portion of our troops had been temporarily repulsed, and Colonel Adrian Hope killed. That sergeant-major was present with the Nuseerabad Brigade at Roya, and called out in English to the Highlanders, as he fired on them, some taunting remarks that they were getting their porridge hot. I think it is possible that this man may have been present with the Nuseerabad Brigade in the Terai, though I did not hear it at the time.

Several years afterwards, I saw an account in an Indian paper of a Sepoy, who was employed as a chaukidar by a European, and who had told him that he had formerly been amongst the mutineers in the Terai, that his party had been accompanied by a European, who, when they surrendered, had bewailed his condition, saying, "You people will be allowed to surrender and go to your homes, but there can be no surrender for me." I believe that this story is possibly true, though I myself never heard of this European after the affair at Roya.

## CHAPTER V

### THE UMBEYLAH CAMPAIGN

AFTER the surrender of the mutineers at our camp, the 5th P.I. returned to Baraitch, and I was very glad, after spending nearly two years in camp, to find myself in a house again ; but it was not to be for long. Early in 1860, the 5th P.I. was ordered to return to the Punjab frontier to form part of the Punjab Frontier Force, as we were due to serve always "trans-Indus," having so to speak, only been lent for service under the Commander-in-Chief in Oude.

We started for the Punjab early in 1860, and marching through Lucknow, halted at Cawnpore, where the men were asked if they would volunteer for service in China, the expeditionary force for Peking being then in process of formation.

It was a most unfortunate moment to ask the men whether they would volunteer for foreign service. Of course, if the Government had wanted us, and had ordered the regiment to go, there would have been no difficulty ; but the men felt they had been continuously on service for nearly three years since May 1857, when they had marched away from

Kohat with only two hours' notice, and now had hopes of seeing their wives and families after a long absence; these hopes being raised by their being ordered to the Punjab. Each man had just received six months "batta" for their services in Oude, and food having been tolerably cheap at Baraich the men had saved a little money which they were anxious to spend with their families before proceeding again on service. Thus, when each man was called before the General at Cawnpore, and asked if he would volunteer for service in China, a considerable number preferred not to go on foreign service. This was a sad disappointment to the British officers, as some other regiment, which had seen little or no service in the mutiny, and the men of which were therefore anxious to get some fighting, went on the China expedition in our place.

Colonel Vaughan left us at Cawnpore and went home to England on leave, while I, who had been made acting second-in-command the previous year, was appointed to officiate as commandant, and to march the regiment back to Kohat on the trans-Indus frontier. We had a long march from Baraich to Kohat, the journey taking nearly three months. On our way through Umballa we met my old regiment, the 27th Inniskilling Fusiliers, which had removed there from Peshawur. As I was still on the rolls of that regiment as a young lieutenant, I met with some good-humoured chaff on my luck of being the commandant of a regiment. We continued our march to Lahore, where I had an interview with the then Lieutenant-General of the Punjab, Sir Robert Montgomery.

At this period the Punjab Frontier Force was not under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, but under those of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. When I was introduced to the Lieutenant-Governor by his military secretary, one of his first remarks was, "You are the youngest commanding officer I have ever seen." I was tolerably young, being only just twenty-five, and looked considerably younger than my age. The Lieutenant-Governor asked me to express to the regiment his appreciation of their services during the campaign in Oude, and we were directed to proceed to Kohat, a portion of whose garrison we were to form. When we arrived at Kohat, we found that the greater part of the troops there had proceeded, under Sir Neville Chamberlain, on the second Wuzerie expedition. Soon after we arrived at Kohat, Captain Somerville, a senior captain from another regiment, was appointed to officiate as Commandant during the absence of Colonel Vaughan on sick leave in England, and I returned to my duty as second in command. After this, for some years, I spent a tolerably uneventful life on the Punjab frontier.

Early in 1861, Colonel Vaughan returned from sick leave, and assumed command of the regiment which was sent to Dera Ismail Khan, Captain Somerville being transferred to the command of another regiment at Dera Ghazi Khan.

Soon after Colonel Vaughan rejoined, the 5th P.I. was ordered to Dera Ismail Khan, that frontier having been in a more or less disturbed state ever since the second Wuzerie expedition under Sir Neville Chamberlain, which had taken place the

previous year. A regiment of Punjab cavalry was stationed at an outpost about forty miles from Dera Ismail Khan, and a wing of an infantry regiment was sent from there to supply the infantry portion of the outpost and to help garrison the small forts along the frontier.

In 1862, the 5th P.I. was ordered back to Kohat, where we remained till October, 1863, when we were directed to form part of a column, under Sir Neville Chamberlain, for the expedition against Buner, and entered that country by the Umbeylah pass. Colonel Vaughan was away on leave at the moment, and I marched the regiment via Naushera and Hoti-Murdan, to Rustam Bazar, where the force was assembled.

Colonel Vaughan rejoined us before the advance commenced. The advance column, which entered the Umbeylah pass, was under the command of Colonel Wild. Having started by night on the 19th October, 1863, we marched until the afternoon of the following day without opposition, until we reached some towering rocks on the left hand side of the pass, from whence a few men opened fire on us, but were soon driven off by the skirmishers of the leading regiment of the force. The road up the pass was rather a difficult one for the baggage animals. When we had arrived a little in advance of the great rocks above mentioned, the force halted, and we bivouacked at this spot, pickets taking up their position on each side of the pass. Where we bivouacked was about one mile from the exit of the Umbeylah pass into the Chumla valley, and we little thought that evening that fierce fighting would take place at this

spot, and that many weary weeks would elapse before we should be able to march beyond it. Our men were already hungry, orders to prepare food having been issued so late the night before that they had not been able to get much ready, and before our arrival at this point they had eaten what little they had. I found the 5th Ghurkas, which was the last regiment of General Wild's advance force, had managed to bring up a few mule-loads of flour, and I went and begged one load from them, which was immediately made over to the regimental cooks, who were able therefrom to make "chapaties" or small unleavened cakes of bread. There was just sufficient to give each man in the regiment one such cake, weighing about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ozs., a short enough allowance for a man for one day, but it was all they had. I saw a hugh elephant tethered alongside our bivouac; how he got there, I cannot think. All baggage had been peremptorily sent to the rear, especially heavy baggage like mess tents. I found on enquiry from the driver, that he belonged to an English regiment miles behind with the rest of the force. I cannot imagine how the elephant had been allowed to get so far ahead, and can only suppose that, owing to the pass being so crowded with troops, it was found impossible to send him back, and so the elephant was allowed to come on chiefly to get him out of the way. At all events, there was one good thing connected with this elephant. Part of an elephant's rations is so many pounds of unleavened cakes which I found his driver cooking for him. As I was very hungry indeed, and the elephant was enjoying a quantity of branches of trees, I asked his



driver if he would sell me a few of the elephant's cakes. He asked one rupee for four small cakes, which was about twenty times their ordinary value. I gladly paid it, however, and went back with the four small cakes to where the officers of my regiment were sitting. Our mess man, who was mounted on a mule, now arrived with a large piece of very salt beef, and a very salt cheese. We divided the four small unleavened cakes among the five officers, and thanks to them we managed to eat a little of the beef and cheese in spite of their extreme saltness. One of the officers went back to the elephant driver and managed to procure two more small cakes, but the price had risen in the half hour that had elapsed since I had made my purchase to one rupee per cake, fully eighty times their proper price, and even at this rate only two were to be got.

The next morning my picket at the big rocks was relieved, and I returned to camp very hungry to find there was nothing to eat. No food was obtainable that day, and if I remember aright, nor the day following. Colonel Vaughan managed to borrow three mule-loads of flour from the Ghurkas, which, with the one I had already borrowed from them, were made into small cakes and given to the men, but the officers got nothing. The first three days were spent in being hungry and going on picket, but there was no fun in the latter diversion, as the enemy did not attack any of the pickets belonging to my regiment, while three days' hunger was very poor amusement indeed. There was always that terrible piece of very salt beef and cheese before our eyes, but I could not have believed how little such stuff

could be eaten, even by hungry men, without bread or vegetables with it. On the third afternoon, some of our mules laden with flour struggled up the pass, and from this time for the several months that we remained in this neighbourhood, we were supplied with food. My regiment had no tents for six weeks, and bivouaced the whole time without any cover. This did not matter when the weather was fine, but it was very unpleasant when it poured with rain, though fortunately at this time we had little rain. The nights were very cold, but we had, luckily, our blankets with us. On one of the first three days when we were foodless, I walked a good way down the pass to find out why no mules laden with food, which I knew were close by when we halted on the first day, had come up. I found the pass a scene of the greatest confusion, and was told orders had been issued that the baggage of the advance brigade should be sent back, while the baggage of the two European regiments should be brought up from the rear. The consequence was that the two opposing streams of mules choked the pass, and the baggage of neither party was able to move at all, and the pass remained in this state for three days. This is one of the things that has been much improved in India since the Umbeylah campaign. Transport columns are now properly organised, and the amount allowed to each individual is cut down to the lowest limit possible, while there are British transport officers in charge of the baggage column. As soon as the baggage did arrive, the greater part of it, except the food, was sent back again, including all tents, except a few retained for hospital purposes. Convoys went down twice a

week, bringing up provisions and taking down the sick. My friend, the elephant, part of whose rations I had on that first day helped to consume, went down with his mess tent.

One day I was sent with the 5th P.I. to crown the heights on the left hand side of the pass, so as to prevent an attack on the convoy while it was going down. I got to my position and back again without a shot being fired, much to my own astonishment, as the ground I had to pass over was bad, and if the enemy had displayed anything like the enterprise and knowledge of fighting which they showed a fortnight later, I should have had a very bad time while returning to camp.

Colonel Wilde was appointed to command the troops holding the hills on the right of our camp, the most exposed and highest of his positions being known as the "Crag picket," while Colonel Vaughan commanded the troops holding the heights on the left hand, the highest and most advanced of his positions being called the "Eagle's Nest." Both at the "Eagle's Nest" and the "Crag picket" severe fighting took place before we had done with them. After the first few days the Umbeylah pass was no more used for our convoys, a path having been discovered by which our base camp could be reached and convoys brought up.

Colonel Vaughan having been appointed to command what was practically a brigade, the command of the 5th P.I. devolved upon me. On the morning of the 26th October, 1863, the pickets on the left of our position were very strongly reinforced, the "Eagle's Nest Picket" being held by

the 20th P.I., some of the 71st Highlanders being stationed on their left, and next came the 6th P.I., and still further to their left, on a mound, was the 5th P.I. with a Punjab mountain battery. This day it was brought home to me very forcibly how inferior the arms of our native troops were to those possessed by the enemy. Most of the enemy were armed with a Kohat-made rifle, which made good shooting at 400 yards, while my regiment was armed with the Brunswick two-grooved rifle which had been issued to our riflemen in the Peninsular war, and some of our troops still carried muskets! The Brunswick rifle could do nothing at all beyond 250 yards, and was not even sighted to any greater distance, while the enemy was making good shooting at us at 400 yards range. As I saw my useless shots were only encouraging the enemy, I gave the order to my men to cease firing, and threw up a "sungar" or loose wall of stones, behind which I made the men lie down. The enemy, when we ceased firing, crept down within 250 yards and commenced to dance a war dance to show their contempt of us. As this was just within the extreme range of our rifles, I picked out thirty or forty marksmen of my regiment, and fired a volley amongst them. A good many dropped, while the rest ran back and took cover beyond the range of our rifles. They had found it much better fun sniping our men while they themselves kept 150 yards or so beyond the range of our rifles. Presently, the 6th P.I. charged the enemy whom they drove back with considerable loss to their old position on our right. The enemy were checked, they being now nearer and coming under the fire of the Highlanders,

who were armed with Enfield rifles, and the mountain battery of four guns was pounding them with shrapnel. An attack on the "Eagle's Nest picket" was pressed home by the enemy, but they were repulsed with heavy loss by Major Brownlow, who held that point. As darkness came on, the enemy, who had lost heavily, retired. We passed a rather uncomfortable night, as we had neither blankets nor great-coats, and at 5,000 feet which was, I believe, the height of our position, the nights at the end of October are cold.

After having chosen the softest stone I could find as a pillow, and posting extra sentries, I lay down amongst my line of skirmishers, covering myself with a very dirty mess table-cloth which I discovered. There was no longer any shortage of food, as the officers of the native regiments were permitted to draw the same rations as the English soldiers, which in India, is a very ample one. I allowed one of the officers, at his intercession, to share my dirty table-cloth, but tired as we were, we did not have much of a night's rest. First we had to visit our sentries constantly to see that they kept on the alert, and the enemy, both men and women, kept coming down in the dark and trying to carry off their dead. We did not interfere with them so long as they carried off those at a little distance from our sungar, but we would not allow them to touch those who had fallen close under the breastwork, as we feared that if they came too near they might make a rush on us.

One hour before dawn we paraded our men and got them under arms, as just before daylight is the favourite time for Afghans to attack. When it was broad daylight, we made a truce for a few hours

to permit the enemy to bury their dead, which were very numerous. Many of those killed were not Afghans at all, but Hindustani fanatics from Sittana, against whom alone this campaign was really directed. The Bunerwals had joined the Sittana fanatics against us, although a proclamation had been issued that the Hindustani colony at Sittana were alone our enemies, and that we would pass through Buner without doing any harm. But all Afghan tribes make it a point of honour to protect the "purdah" or veil of their country, and will not allow an army to pass through for any purpose unless they have been strongly coerced. Up to this time, the Bunerwals had never allowed an army to enter their country, and the people who attacked us to-day were chiefly of this tribe, and also from the Chumla valley, into which the Umbeylah pass opens about a mile beyond our present position. The Bunerwals and Chumla people carried off all their own dead during the short truce which we had allowed them, but in many cases the Sittana fanatics, being foreigners and often not even Mahommedans, were left lying for us to bury, a very difficult task, as the soil was very rocky, and the bodies exposed to the sun soon became extremely unpleasant. We buried as many as we could, and many which were not in a state to be moved had brushwood and timber piled over them, and were burnt. Though this was done only in a few cases, and only when the body could not be recognised as that of a Mohammedan, the enemy were much offended, and declared that we always burnt the bodies of their dead that fell into our hands. Burning the dead is much disliked by Mohammedans, as

they think that it will prevent their resurrection at the last day.

We remained in our position on the mound near the mountain battery for several days, detaching one company to hold our picket by the big rocks on our left on the road to our camp. After two days the strong picket of the 20th P.I. at the Eagle's Nest, under Major Brownlow, was relieved by a party of the 14th Sikhs. After they had held it two days, Colonel Vaughan ordered me to take it over, and to take the whole regiment there, except one company which was left as picket at the big rocks. I think the day I took it over was the 30th of October, and we held the Eagle's Nest picket under my command for twenty-two days, until the abandonment by Sir Neville Chamberlain's orders of the whole of the pickets on the left-hand side of the pass. We had rather a trying time on this picket, as we were exposed to a constant fire night and day, and had to be always on the alert to repulse threatened attacks, especially every Wednesday and Friday when the enemy always assembled in large numbers.

They had constructed a large and strong "sungar" on the brow of the hill about 400 yards above us, from whence they were able to pour down a very disagreeable fire into the Eagle's Nest, as the entrenchment there covered but a small space and was very crowded with men, while we, in return, could do them little harm.

Small parties used to creep down as near as 150 yards, from whence, while under good cover, a few of the enemy brought to bear a very galling

fire, but at that close range we could also make it pretty hot for them, and I was always given a few marksmen with Enfield rifles from one of the European regiments.

When the fire from the enemy's sungar at 400 yards became too hot to be pleasant, as it generally did on Wednesdays and Fridays, I used to send a note over to Colonel Vaughan, who remained with the mountain battery on the mound which we had held on the 26th of October, and asked that the battery should drop a few shells into it, which soon drove them out, and gave us a little rest from their fire. At night we had to be especially on the alert to prevent a rush of the enemy into our picket. One day, about noon, Colonel Vaughan sent me a note directing me to put up an "abbatis" to prevent a rush of the enemy. As there was a party of the enemy firing at us at 150 yards, this was rather a dangerous operation. I made my men cut the stakes and branches necessary for the abbatis in a safe place at the rear of our post, and I jumped over the breast-work of our picket taking with me a volunteer, Subadar Major Aziz Khan, an Afghan native officer. I then made all the other men lie down behind our low wall, and pass the sharpened stakes to myself and Subadar Major, and we proceeded to fasten them into the ground a few feet in advance of our breast-work, my men keeping up a hot fire on the enemy to try and spoil their aim. At last we had almost completed the abbatis, and the Subadar Major and myself had remained unhurt, in spite of several narrow shaves, when a bullet hit me, just grazing my left temple, and spinning me half round with



the shock. I left off laying the small remaining part of the abbatis and retired behind the breastwork. Colonel Vaughan soon afterwards visited my picket and found fault with me, saying, "Why did you expose yourself by laying the abbatis by day? I meant you to do it by night." I replied, "You did not say so in your letter, you only ordered me to lay an abbatis, and I naturally supposed you wanted it done at once." The only ill effects of the slight wound I had received was that it gave me a headache for some hours. I showed the wound to our doctor, but did not return myself wounded, as it was so slight.

On the ninth day that I held the Eagle's Nest picket we were visited by Sir Neville Chamberlain and his staff, who asked Colonel Vaughan (who was with him) how long the 5th P.I. had held the Eagle's Nest. Colonel Vaughan replied, "Nine days." Sir Neville Chamberlain said, "Nine days is too long to keep the same men exposed to so heavy a fire, you should relieve them by some other regiment," Colonel Vaughan replied, "I have confidence in the regiment, and in Lieut. Stewart who is commanding, and would prefer, as I am answerable for the post, to keep them here." The result was we were not relieved, and I was glad of it, as the Eagle's Nest picket and the Crag picket, opposite us, were the most important posts during the fighting in the Umbeylah pass, the Crag picket being three times captured by the enemy and our men driven out. I am happy to say the Eagle's Nest was never captured, and we remained there until the night of the 17th November, when I received orders that at

one hour before dawn the next morning I was to evacuate Eagle's Nest, and the whole of the troops were to be concentrated on the heights at the right of the pass. I expected a grand attack on the Eagle's Nest this day as the enemy's sungar above me was more crowded with men than I had seen it on the day when Major Brownlow held this picket, and evidently such was the intention of the enemy on the morning of the 18th. But on that morning, I, as ordered, evacuated my picket one hour before dawn and did it so quietly that, though the enemy was close by me, they never discovered that we had gone until after daylight. We retired to various other pickets below us, who also retired successfully. We marched to our new position through the troops in the narrow valley at the bottom of the pass, and took up the position allotted for our bivouac some 250 yards below the Crag picket, in what came to be known as the "Upper Camp," commanded by Colonel Vaughan. Here was stationed the 1st, the 5th, the 6th and the 20th P.I., also a Punjab mountain battery. We sat down and were just about to eat a picnic breakfast on the ground which was to form our new camp, when heavy firing commenced at the picket just below us held by the 14th Sikhs and the 71st Highlanders. I was ordered, before I had taken my breakfast, to reinforce with 100 men the 14th Sikh picket. I started to do so, but before I reached that picket, I received orders to leave there one English officer with thirty men. I did so, and took the remaining seventy back to our camp, where I paraded the whole regiment, and made them over to Colonel

Vaughan, who took us out, and we were employed hard at work the whole day in building a new picket, somewhat in advance of the Crag picket. Some other regiment was placed in this picket, and at nightfall we returned to our bivouac, and were just going to have some dinner, when I received orders to take 100 men and reinforce the picket held by the 14th Sikhs and 71st Highlanders. But I had hardly reached the new picket when I met the 71st Highlanders marching back, and I asked the officer commanding what were my orders, as I had been told to reinforce his picket. He said, "I have received orders to abandon that picket and retire into the camp, but I have no orders for you." I went on a little way in the direction of the picket I had been directed to go, but I found it entirely abandoned. I, however, came upon a party of forty men of the 20th P.I., under Lieut. Wheeler, and took up a position alongside of his men. There was no attack going on at the time, though we could hear the enemy shrieking down below, and evidently plundering the dead bodies left in the picket which had just been given up.

After taking up our position alongside of the men of the 20th P.I., and finding that no attack was immediately imminent, I told Lieut. Wheeler, who also had no definite orders, to take the command of my men, while I went back to try and get some instructions as to what we were to do. I had been sent to reinforce a picket which had received orders to retire, and whose commanding officer was as much in the dark as I was. I said to Lieut. Wheeler, "You are not likely to be attacked for some time

and I will be back with orders within ten minutes." I was, however, not away even five minutes, as I met Sir Neville Chamberlain and Col. Vaughan who were bringing me orders. Sir Neville Chamberlain and Col. Vaughan came to the position which I had taken up, placing the forty men of the 20th P.I. behind a big rock on our left, and stationing my hundred men in a long line on their right. Sir Neville Chamberlain said to me, "You must hold this position at any cost to-night. Col. Vaughan will send you some more men to enable you to do so." Col. Vaughan asked me how many more men I would require. I replied, "Send me a British Officer and 100 more men." In a little while I was reinforced by Lieut. Fox with 100 men of the 5th P.I., and we built a small sungar in front of our position. But the men were dreadfully tired, as we had been working continuously since one hour before dawn, and I do not think the 100 men that I brought had had any food at all that day. I know I had not had any, but I think the second 100 who came with Lieut. Fox may have found a little time in which to get some food.

Not only had we been at work since an hour before dawn without food, but the night before momentarily expecting an attack from the enemy, nobody had had any sleep. Some blankets and food were now sent down to me, but as I had been without food for some thirty-six hours, and had hardly sat down during that period, I was dreadfully tired. We were soon obliged to knock off building the breastwork, as there were very few stones, and the men, with the best will in the world, were too

fatigued to search for any. I posted my sentries, and, rolled in my blankets (it being now the 18th November, and very cold at this height above the sea) I lay down amongst my men, and after drinking a glass of rum and water, and eating a little biscuit dipped in it, managed to get some sleep. We had a fairly good night, though a rush was made by a small party of the enemy on our position, but finding that we received them on a line of fixed bayonets, they ran back. As soon as it was light, I saw that the 1st P.I. were drawn up on my right while a British regiment and half a battery of artillery were extended about 150 yards in my rear as a support. They had been brought down long after dark, and I should have passed a more comfortable night if I had known of their presence and support.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE UMBEYLAH CAMPAIGN (*continued*)

IN the course of the morning I was allowed with my men to return to our camp, and we passed a tolerably quiet day. We had a few tents served out to us, one Sepoy's "pal" among nine officers. Some young officers had been sent to join us, but they were not much use, as none of them spoke any language but English. Though they were officers of the Indian army, they had always served with English troops, and spoke no Hindustani. If they had been sent at the commencement of the campaign, they might have been very useful, but arriving just as it was over, they were of little help. One of them asked me whether a "subadar" or native captain was superior to a "havildar" or sergeant, which shows how much they knew about native troops. Col. Vaughan ordered that these newly-arrived officers should not take picket duty, except accompanied by one of the older officers, and as picket duty was very severe just then, their arrival did not give us much assistance. Col. Vaughan also ordered that Subadar Major Aziz Khan, who was, I personally consider, the bravest man belonging to any nation, should be

counted as a European officer when taking picket duty, and this relieved us a little.

Having given us a little rest on the 19th of November the enemy determined to give us a lively time on the 20th, as their numbers had now very much increased. The Akhund of Swat, a religious leader of great importance, had arrived, and, it was said, had brought 40,000 men with him, and had encamped in the Chumla valley, into which we could see from our camp. Before advancing to attack us, we could see them proceed to his camp and have themselves and their colours blessed by him, saying, "As long as you continue to advance, I, by my miraculous power, will not allow any bullet to strike you, nor any sword to cut you; you may proceed to the very muzzle of the cannon, and I will close their mouths. You may advance and throw your 'poshteens' (sheepskin coats) right over the guns, yet remain unscathed." The worst of it was that, not only did the enemy thoroughly believe all this, but many of our own men also had a sneaking belief in the power of the Akhund of Swat to work miracles. A sergeant of mine told me that, when on furlough, he had visited the Akhund of Swat and had seen him daily perform a miracle. He took a small cooking vessel, placed some rice within it, and had it cooked. He then proceeded, after blessing it, to distribute the rice to his followers, and the supply failed not, notwithstanding the many thousands who required to be fed until each one had had enough! Fortunately not many of our men were followers of the Akhund of Swat, though several were followers of a rival Akhund,

who was known as the Mullah of Kotah. This Mullah had been declared an infidel and heretic by the Akhund of Swat, who had sent one of his disciples to Kotah to kill the Mullah on the ground that, being an infidel, he ought to die. The Mullah of Kotah was very badly wounded, but he recovered, and his recovery was looked upon as a miracle by his own followers. Our Subadar Major, Aziz Khan, was a native of Kotah and an enthusiastic disciple of this Mullah, and there were several such who refused to believe in the so-called miraculous powers of the Akhund of Swat. We had also some Bunerwals in the regiment, and I will say for them that they behaved magnificently, fighting well against their kindred and their priests.

The day we advanced through the pass, a Bunerwal appeared and came up to me and said: "I was a havildar once in your regiment and fought through the Indian mutiny. I am no longer a soldier of yours, but as I would not on any account, after twelve years' service in your regiment fight against them, I have come to re-enlist and fight on your side." He was accordingly re-enlisted on the spot and made corporal, and later a sergeant on the first vacancy. Another day, while holding the Eagle's Nest picket, a young Bunerwal ran into the picket under a heavy fire from us, and, touching the first English officer he saw, he said: "I have come to serve under this chief." We kept him for some days, and finding him willing to fight, we enlisted him also. The very day peace was concluded between the Bunerwals and ourselves, we sent out a recruiting party, and enlisted twelve very fine



recruits from among them. One of the men had received a severe wound in the thigh, but it had healed over.

I must now return to the fighting which took place on the 20th November. I myself was on duty with about 420 men of the 5th P.I. lining the breastwork at the entrance of the upper camp, only some 250 yards or so from the Crag picket, so I had a particularly good view of that point this day. The enemy had covered the heights beyond the Crag picket, and commanded it with some 5,000 men, bringing a very heavy fire indeed to bear on the picket. Presently about 1,500 spearmen and swordsmen of the enemy collected in the ravine just under the walls of the picket. The mountain battery alongside of which I was standing kept throwing shells over the picket and amongst these men. An officer of the picket, I think it was Major Rogers of the 20th P.I. but I could not be certain, kept calling out to the officer commanding the battery, "a little to the right," or "a little to the left," to direct his fire. Presently I saw a great rush of the enemy's swordsmen and spearmen into the picket, and a fierce hand-to-hand fight ensued. Then we saw some European soldiers run down from the picket and enter our camp by the breastwork we were guarding. The fight in the picket continued for some time longer, when some more European soldiers and some of the 20th P.I. were seen to leave the picket. The last man to come in was Major Rogers of the 20th P.I., who was helping to carry a wounded man of his regiment. Of course the moment our men had quitted the picket, a tremendous

fire was brought to bear on the enemy in it, not only from the mountain battery alongside of us, but also from Major Salt's Punjab battery of nine-pounders from the lower camp, and my 420 men were also pouring in a heavy musketry fire. In a very few minutes, Sir Neville Chamberlain arrived with his 71st Highlanders and the 5th Ghurkas, when an attack was immediately formed to re-take the picket. Sir Neville Chamberlain who had been previously wounded eight times in different campaigns, was leading the attack, while Colonel Hope was leading the 71st Highlanders, and the Ghurkas were being led by their commanding officer. The 5th P.I. were also employed in this attack. In the first few minutes we lost very heavily, especially in senior officers. Sir Neville Chamberlain and his aide-de-camp were both severely wounded, this being the ninth time Sir Neville Chamberlain had been wounded in action. Colonel Hope, of the 71st Highlanders, was shot through the thigh, but continued to struggle up the hill (which was terribly steep) with his men. Colonel Vaughan was also wounded in the leg, and the officer commanding the 5th Ghurkas was wounded in the hand.

Sir Neville Chamberlain and his aide-de-camp's wounds were severe, the rest of the wounds were not so serious. The first two men to enter the picket were Lieutenant Beckett, the adjutant of the 5th P.I., and the Sergeant-major of the 71st Highlanders. Just about this time a slight incident happened to me. I had climbed up until I was close to the picket at a very steep point towards the left of it, when some of the enemy began to throw some shells

amongst us which happened to have been placed there by our men. We had been in the habit of using these shells like hand-grenades, by lighting a very short fuse in them and then throwing them to explode amongst the enemy. The enemy, however, did not understand this use of them, and one individual merely flung one at me as he would have a rock or any other missile, fortunately without hitting me.

When I reached the top, I saw Colonel Hope collecting some of the Highlanders for an attack on the picket in the construction of which my regiment had been employed on the 18th of November, but which had been dismantled and abandoned on the 19th as too far off to be efficiently held, and another picket was constructed to the right of the Crag which was called the Water picket. I spoke to Col. Hope, and mentioned this to him. We were all deeply grieved at Sir Neville Chamberlain being so severely wounded. Our losses in the campaign up to the evening of the 20th November, had been fourteen British officers, four native officers, and 213 men killed; 15 British officers, 17 native officers and 468 men wounded, our total loss to this day being 731 killed and wounded.

In the short time we were waiting, after the taking of the Crag picket by the enemy and before Sir Neville Chamberlain and the 71st Highlanders had arrived, a scene took place which impressed itself strongly on my memory. After the last man who reached our breastwork had come in from the picket, we saw a British soldier, a man of the 101st Fusiliers, struggling painfully down the steep hill. He was

evidently wounded in the leg and got along with much difficulty. He had reached within about 60 yards of the picket, and about 190 from us, when an Afghan saw him and dashed out of the picket in pursuit of him. I believe every man of my 420 fired at that Afghan, and many of them loaded and fired again, but so far as I could see, he remained untouched. At the same time two native officers, Afghans and very active men, ran up the hill to try and rescue the wounded fusilier, but the Afghan who had only a few yards to run down hill, while they had 190 yards to run up hill, reached the wounded man first and killed him, hacking his body before us. All this time the Afghan was being fired at heavily, not only by my men but by those of another regiment as well, yet did not appear to be hit. A moment afterwards, Subadar Rahman Khan reached the spot where he was and rushed at him, sword in hand. The Afghan took up a large rock and dashed it full in the face of the native officer, rolling him over and over down the hill for a few yards. Rahman Khan, however, picked himself up, bound up his smashed face with the end of his turban, and went at him again. This time every man ceased firing, and for a few moments we saw as pretty a fight with swords as we could wish; then we saw the Afghan go down. Rahman Khan gave him two or three more sword cuts, then wiped his sword and walked quietly back to us. Every one who saw the action gave him a cheer. His face and mouth were much cut by the large piece of rock which had been dashed at him, and he was a good deal hurt. He received the Order of Merit, which is given to Indian soldiers instead of the V.C. The

charmed life borne by the Afghan and the apparent impossibility of hitting him, confirmed our men in the belief that the man had received a charm against bullets from the Akhund of Swat, and that he only became vulnerable when the thought of running away occurred to him. It was curious to see, as I did that day, the enemy being whacked up to the attack by their chiefs who were using a stout cudgel on any of their men who attempted to bolt. But I will say this for the enemy that most of them were very brave, and only very few required any whacking.

The 20th November was the last time that the Crag picket was taken and re-taken. After this we always kept a company of the native regiment out in the open about 200 yards to the left of the crag, where the enemy used to assemble for attacking it. This was really a picket in the ordinary sense of the word, as it was placed in the open with orders to retire if heavily pressed, when it was immediately reinforced from the upper camp. In fact, what we generally called pickets were not pickets at all, but were small detachments in well fortified posts which were not to be given up so long as they could possibly be held.

About this period in the campaign, rumours were current in the camp that orders had been received suggesting our retirement, but, at the remonstrance of Sir Neville Chamberlain, the idea was given up and reinforcements were sent to us. To retire would have been a fatal error, and we were all glad to hear that such a mad idea had been given up. Of course, until the reinforcements arrived, we at Umbeylah had rather a hot time of it, as the enemy were

increasing very much in numbers. The Akhund of Swat having proclaimed a 'Jehad,' or Holy war, was joined by thousands from the Peshawur valley and from Dhir. One day, as I was holding the picket in the open ground to the left of the Crag picket, I saw two men walking up to us, who evidently thought, as my men were talking Afghan, that we were one of the enemy's pickets, and my sentry fired at them. I immediately shouted out to him, "Why did you do that?" and told him to cry out in Pushtu, "Come on!" whereupon they walked, quite unsuspectingly, right into my picket and were made prisoners. Upon enquiring who they were, they replied that they were British subjects from Naushera, but having received the call of the Akhund of Swat to fight the infidel, they had arrived only the day before, and had been sent up to join a party of the enemy in our neighbourhood, and hearing us speak Pushtu, they supposed we were some of their own people. I blindfolded them and sent them to the chief civil officer, the Commissioner of Peshawur, who was in the lower camp. They were sent down to Peshawur, where they received a short term of imprisonment, and were then released.

Another day, I accompanied a party of my regiment, which was sent down to the picket that had been held on the 18th November by the 71st Highlanders and the 14th Sikhs, to collect the bodies of the dead who had fallen there, and which had not been brought away. We brought in the bodies of Captain C. Smith, Ensign C. Murray, and several other bodies of officers, whose names I do not recollect. The bodies had been much hacked about,

and the head of ensign Murray we did not find at all. I was told by an officer that he had himself seen a picture done by Murray at Naushera before the campaign commenced, and that Murray had said to him, "That is how I shall be found." It was a picture of himself with the head lying a long way off. It proved literally true, but we were never able to find his head, and I think it had probably been carried off by one of the enemy on the point of his spear as a trophy.

After the 20th November we were more successful ; no more pickets were ever taken, and though the number of the enemy increased and severe fights took place every Wednesday and Friday, the enemy seemed to have lost all hope of winning, and though they fought doggedly on, they made no advance. Reinforcements for us did at last commence to arrive after some weeks, though they had to be brought from afar. Peshawur, Naushera and the Punjab frontier stations had already been denuded of troops to form our original force and fresh troops had to be brought from a considerable distance, and there being no railways in those days in our part of India, they could only come by route march, which is always a slow process. At the end of November, General Garvock arrived to take command in place of Sir Neville Chamberlain, and Colonels Wild and Vaughan were appointed to command brigades under him. A few days later the 7th Fusiliers, the 93rd Highlanders, Probyn's Horse, and some other regiments arrived.

Major James, the Commissioner at Peshawur, who thoroughly understood Afghans and their ways, but

who had been on furlough in England, also arrived. He had been appointed chief political officer with the camp, and our communication with the Afghans from this date took another character. What the young officers in camp designated as "James' powders" were administered and seemed to have the usual drastic effect on the enemy which powders generally have on the human body. Major James soon caused considerable friction amongst the chiefs of the enemy, who were, at the best of times, usually at sixes and sevens with one another, but were, on this occasion, united through the great influence of the Akhund of Swat. His *modus operandi* was to write a letter to one of the chiefs, (of course the Commissioner of Peshawur is, as a rule, in constant communication with the chiefs beyond the border) congratulating him on the fighting power of his following. The other chiefs soon heard of this and demanded to see the letter. When shown to them, they said "Oh nonsense, that letter is only meant for you to show to us. No doubt the real letter offers you a large bribe to secede from our coalition," and from that moment that chief was distrusted by the others. A deputation of Buner chiefs was induced, in December, to visit our camp, and had an interview with Major James to discuss the terms under which we should be prepared to make peace. He declared our intention was to proceed and destroy the Hindustani colony of fanatics at Mulka, and that we would demand that they should no longer be protected by the frontier tribes, and that he would take an engagement from them to this effect. The "Jirga" or Council of the Buner chiefs returned to consult



with their friends on the situation, and sent a reply to Major James saying his proposals were utterly rejected, and we fully expected a general attack on our position by the combined tribes.

But our position had been considerably strengthened; the "Crag" picket and the "Water" picket, which were the two most advanced positions we held, had been very strongly fortified, and as we had received considerable reinforcements we were in a position not only to hold our own, but even to deliver a counter attack on the enemy.

On the 15th December, General Garvock took out 5000 men for his attack on the conical hill near the village of Laloo, situated some two miles beyond the "Crag" picket, while I was sent, in command of the 5th P.I., down to the lower camp to take the place of some of these troops. General Garvock made a smart advance, carried the different sungars at the point of the bayonet, and soon cleared the hill. The 101st Madras Fusileers particularly distinguished themselves in this engagement.

In the course of the day orders were sent to me to reinforce the picket on the left front of the crag, which was held by the 1st P.I. I accordingly sent up a company of the 5th P.I. under Lieut. Hall, and an attack on that picket was repulsed by the combined holders of it. It amused me rather to look over the lower camp, which I never had time to visit before, though it was only a few hundred yards from ours, and I could not help remarking the comparative luxury enjoyed here (though that was not great) to our more austere living in the upper camp, where I had no tent, but was satisfied instead with

a piece of carpet rigged over a pole. My small tent, which I had originally brought with me, had been sent to the rear with the baggage at the commencement of the campaign, and I never got it back. I contented myself with my makeshift of a piece of carpet spread over a pole until the heavy rains set in about Christmas time, when I shared a Sepoy's "pal" with nine other officers.

The following day, the 16th December, our attacking force descended into the Chumla valley, and burnt the village of Umbeylah. I was ordered with a portion of the 5th P.I. to escort three field guns, which were carried upon elephants from the lower camp to Umbeylah village, so that on this day's attack I saw a good deal, but only as a spectator, the 5th P.I. not being engaged. Our troops, after burning the village of Umbeylah, advanced towards the entrance of the Buner valley, when a sudden rush was made upon them by a party of the enemy who had been concealed in a ravine. They were a body of Ghazis or fanatics who court death and paradise, throwing themselves on the bayonets of a portion of the advancing line, and forcing a gap in the ranks, which was at once filled up by the supernumeraries. The native regiment, supported by the 7th Fusiliers, bore the attack well, but I cannot say that the fanatics were driven back, for I believe they were all killed on the spot, while the regiment advanced steadily on its course. Throughout this campaign it was very wonderful to see how these Hindustani fanatics appeared to invite death. They were insignificant-looking natives, mostly from Bengal, with the physique

of under-sized girls. Bengalis are notorious as a non-fighting race, yet these men did not hesitate to charge and meet Sikhs who are big, powerful men ; their object being to die after doing all the injury they could to their enemies. Men in that frame of mind are very difficult to stop. As far as I could learn, many of these fanatics were converted Hindoos who, like perverts of nearly all religions, carry their fanaticism to excess.

After the half battery I had escorted had joined our troops in the Chumla valley, my duties were ended, and I had to return and take up my position in the lower camp. The shots fired to-day were the last of the Umbeylah campaign ; a campaign that had taught both our troops and their leaders many lessons in hill-warfare, and especially a thorough respect for our principal enemy, the Bunerwals, who, whatever tribe might be opposing us always led the attack with a few stray Hindustani fanatics.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOME ADVENTURES BY RIVER AND SEA

AFTER we returned to Kohat with our twelve Bunerwal recruits, several of their relatives came there to visit them, and amongst these was a man in whom I became much interested. He came to see me and showed me his wounds, three of which he had received in this campaign, and which I examined, and two of them were frightfully severe. I do not think any European would have recovered from either of them; he had not received them at the same time, in fact there had been an interval of nearly two months, he told me, between their infliction, as he had been during all that period laid up with his first wound. A bullet had entered just at the semi-circle formed by the collar bone, and had passed through the whole length of his body. I examined the exit and entrance of the bullet, and there could be no question they had been made by the same one. This shot had been fired at him by a man standing immediately above him in the attack on the "Eagle's Nest" picket on the 26th of October. As soon as he was well of his wound, he joined in another attack, no doubt leading, and this time

received a tremendous sword-cut, which, though it had healed when I saw it about a year after, had left a deep and wide gash right across his body. The third wound was not a severe one, and I have forgotten where it had been inflicted. This man seemed none the worse for all his wounds, in fact, seemed to enjoy speaking of them, while he bore no ill-will towards us, laughingly telling me his story. It really was worth while meeting such an enemy, who felt they *must* fight even against a strongly-defended position held by brave men.

The effect of our victories of the 15th and 16th of December was immediate and decisive. The Akhund of Swat retired with his following to Swat and the Nawab of Dhir, Guzzen Khan by name, disappeared with his 6,000 followers. We did not think much of the Dhirwals as fighting men at Umbeylah. Peace was made with the Bunerwals, the conditions being that one regiment of our force, the Guide Corps, should accompany Col. Taylor, who had lately acted as Commissioner at Peshawur, while Major James was absent, and destroy the newly-built village of Mulka. The Guides commenced their march on the 20th of December through the Chumla valley to Mulka, which place they set on fire and utterly demolished. The factory for making gun-powder on a large scale was also destroyed, and the Guides then returned to our camp.

On Christmas day we left Umbeylah camp, and commenced our march back to Kohat. Colonel Vaughan remained at the base camp at Rustam Bazar to assist General Chamberlain in writing his despatches, while I was ordered to march the 5th

P.I. back to Kohat, where the Afridis were said to be in a disturbed state. We made a rapid march passing through Hoti Murdan and Naushera, and then through the Kohat pass to Kohat itself. This march through the Kohat pass, which is generally a quiet piece of country, though not our own territory, was at this moment a somewhat dangerous undertaking, as the Afridis who inhabited it were in a disturbed state, and I rather expected an attack while passing through the pass, but the tribes kept aloof from us, and we reached Kohat on the 30th December, 1863, having been away from it a little more than two and a half months during the Umbeylah campaign. There was at this time a good deal of excitement along the Kohat border, but the news of the defeat of the Bunerwals and the Akhund of Swat was spreading, and the excitement soon passed off.

The whole of the regiments of the Bengal army (including the Punjab Frontier Force) were reorganised in 1864, and the number of British officers was slightly increased. I, who had been second in command since 1859, lost my appointment, a much senior officer, a major of long standing, being appointed in my place, and I was made wing commander, each wing having now an officer to command it with a wing subaltern under him. Major Hayley, the officer appointed to be the new second in command, joined us at Kohat in February, 1864. I thought it rather hard, after I had been so long second in command, and had practically commanded the 5th P.I. through the Umbeylah campaign, and been mentioned in despatches, that I should be passed

over, but I was still only a lieutenant, while Major Hayley was not only much my senior, but had done good service at Delhi, and it was necessary to provide for officers of senior rank who were without employ. Major Hayley, however, only remained with us two months, and then went home on leave. By doing so he forfeited his appointment in the 5th P.I., and I was promoted to his place. I spent two more or less uneventful years (1864 and 1865) as second in command of the 5th P.I. and station staff officer at Kohat.

In May, 1866, having in the meantime been promoted to Captain, I was granted six months' leave to go to England. I went to Multan, where I embarked on the river steamer for Karachi. On board the steamer I found a very pleasant party of fourteen passengers, amongst whom were the Brigadier-General commanding the Punjab Force, Sir Alfred Wilde, Sir Frederic Goldsmid, then Director of the European portion of the Indo-European Telegraph, and Colonel Smith, Director of the Persian portion of that line, who gave me a warm invitation to accompany him through Persia to Teheran.

We had rather an eventful voyage down the Indus in our little steamer.

At nightfall our steamer was moored beside the bank, the navigation of the Indus being impossible in the dark in consequence of the snags and sand-banks. When we were only twelve hours' journey from Kotri, and while we were having lunch in the cabin, there was a tremendous bump against the steamer, which had run on a snag or dead tree.

Similar mishaps had occurred several times previously on this journey, so the passengers did not think much of it, but one of the stewards ran down and said "The vessel is rapidly sinking!" and all the passengers rushed on deck with the exception of myself and one other, who determined to finish our lunch. After lunch, on going on deck, we were just in time to see the vessel go down head foremost, a snag having broken a large hole through the bottom of her forward compartment. She was built in three compartments, so when her forward compartment filled with water, she simply stood on her head in the river, and as the depth of the river was less than the length of the steamer, a small portion of her stern remained out of the water, on which the crew and passengers assembled. The deck was at a sharp angle, and the river here several miles wide at this season, so our position was not a comfortable one, as we expected every moment that the after bulkhead, which kept the water out, would give way, and the steamer go down entirely, but there were plenty of boats about in which the crew and passengers could have escaped. We determined, however, to remain on board in the hope that some passing steamer would take us off. That evening we received barely any food, all provisions being lost in the flooded forward compartment and the passenger and myself who had remained to finish lunch, felt glad that we had done so. During the night we all slept on the portion of the ship that remained above water. In the morning, the passengers and a few sailors borrowed a boat and determined to try and reach Kotri, as



we were all by now getting extremely hungry. Sir Alfred Wilde alone said he would prefer remaining on board on the chance of being picked off by a steamer. After drifting down the Indus towards Kotri for some four hours, we eventually met a tiny tug boat belonging to the same company as our wrecked steamer and which had been sent to our assistance. We got on board, and asked the captain to take us to Kotri. He said, "Yes, if all the passengers are here." On hearing that Sir Alfred Wilde was still on board the steamer, he said, "I have especially been sent to bring Sir Alfred Wilde, and I must go and fetch him," so we immediately turned back. When we asked the captain if he had anything to eat on board, he replied, "I have no food on board, even for myself. I only had four chops, and two of these I must give to the engineer or else he will go on strike. The other two I will have cooked and given to the two ladies" (of our party).

We did not reach the wreck till evening, when we found Sir Alfred Wilde had been taken off by another steamer, and as it was then too late to travel to Kotri, we had to spend another night on the wreck without food, as there was none even on the tug which had picked us up. However, the captain's wife had sent him two loaves of bread which he divided amongst us, a poor allowance for sixteen hungry Europeans. In addition a few cucumbers were procured from somewhere, and with this slight meal we had to be contented. The next morning at daybreak, the tug conveyed us to Kotri dak bungalow, where we found Sir Alfred Wilde, and where we were able to break our long, involuntary fast.

After breakfast we got into the train at Kotri and proceeded to Karachi, from whence all the other passengers took steamer to Bombay, but I remained at the hotel at Karachi to await the return of Col. Smith from Bombay, as we proposed going on a fortnight later by the Persian Gulf steamer to Bushire. Col. Smith had important business to transact with the Governor of Bombay, concerning a portion of the Persian line of which he was the Director, and I arranged to meet him on board the Persian Gulf steamer due at Karachi a fortnight later.

At the end of that time I embarked, and found Col. Smith on board. The voyage proved rather a disastrous one for the captain of the steamer, as he managed, (though his steamer was the bi-monthly mail one) to leave Karachi without taking on board his mail bag, an oversight which he did not discover till he had been many hours at sea. Two or three days later, while off the coast of Baluchistan, he ran his ship on a sandbank which lay eighteen miles out of the course in which he believed he was steering. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, when we were at dinner, that we heard the grating of the keel on the sandbank and there we were high and dry some eighteen miles from land in the Indian Ocean. The question was in what state of the tide had we run on this bank, as if it had happened at low tide, we might at the next high tide get her off, supposing it did not come on to blow in the meantime, in which case the ship would probably knock herself to pieces. Col. Smith and I chaffed each other very much about our two wrecks in little

more than a fortnight, and suggested that one of us must certainly be a Jonah. However, all is well that ends well. It turned out that we had run aground, fortunately, at very low tide, so that at high tide the ship floated off, and we continued our voyage to Bunder Abbas without further mishap. Colonel Smith had messages and presents from the Governor of Bombay for the Arab chief who was Governor of Bunder Abbas for the Imam of Muscat. Bunder Abbas at this time belonged, nominally, to Persia, but it was ruled, under some sort of lease, by Arab chiefs dependent on Muscat. Persia has long since taken possession and re-asserted her authority.

The presents for the Governor consisted of rifles and many baskets of Bombay mangoes, a fruit which is much appreciated in this part of the world, or indeed anywhere where one can get them. Of course it was very important for the safeguarding of our line of telegraphs (both the cable and the land line through Baluchistan) that we should keep on good terms with the Governor of Bunder Abbas. Shortly before reaching Bunder Abbas, we had passed the desolate island of Ormuz, where the Portuguese had once a rich and fine city. Bunder Abbas is celebrated throughout Persia for its breed of donkeys; they are very small, but have a quick short amble, which is very easy for the rider, and quite as fast as a good horse could walk. These donkeys never require a whip, being most willing little animals. They fetch large prices in the rest of Persia, though not so much, however, as do the large white donkeys of the Bagdad breed, which

are much ridden by the priests. A good ambling donkey of that breed easily fetches £100 in Persia. I have known a rather eccentric Persian prime minister turn out and review the whole of the army in Teheran from the back of a white donkey, and even the English Minister there, on the occasion of my first visit, Mr Alison, would often be seen riding about on one decorated with a jewelled bridle.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MY JOURNEY HOME ACROSS PERSIA

WE arrived at Bushire on the 4th June, 1866, and were very kindly received at the Residency by Sir Lewis Pelly, the Consul-General and agent for the Governor-General of India. There are three Consuls-General in Persia (generally called Residents), who are paid by the Indian Government, and they are stationed at Bagdad, at Bushire, and the third at Mashad. I little thought, when I landed in Persia on this occasion, that I should one day myself be Consul-General at Mashad, but this was not until several years later.

Sir Lewis Pelly not only had a guard of 50 Bombay Native Infantry and a small escort of cavalry kept especially for his protection, but he had also four small gunboats of the Bombay Marines under his orders to act as police in the Persian Gulf. There is also a British fleet under a Commodore of the Royal Navy generally present in the Persian Gulf; and at times they are all required. The pearl fishery at the island of Bahrein and other parts of the gulf, used to attract the presence of many unruly spirits from the Arab coast between El Hasa, which

nominally belongs to Turkey, and the coast of Oman which has a certain indefinite dependence on Great Britain. This coast, known as the pirate coast, is well named, as formerly, when there was no British fleet to police the sea, the pirates used actually to attack and capture fully armed frigates belonging to the East India Company, but only after a severe engagement sometimes lasting several days. In one instance several hundred pirate vessels attacked a frigate, finally overpowering her, and massacring the crew. Thanks to the efforts of the gun-boats and of the British fleet, good order and peace generally prevail now-a-days along these coasts, though small native vessels from Bombay and Karachi are occasionally boarded when becalmed near the coast, and any loose cash or other valuables they may have on board abstracted. In 1870 I was again in this part of the world at Basra near the mouth of the Shutt-el-Arab, when I translated for the British Consul (with whom I was staying) the complaint of a native ship's captain who declared his small coaster had been stopped and 450 rupees in cash taken away by the pirates near the mouth of the river.

Sir Lewis Pelly showed me some fine arab horses which he had procured during a visit he had made to Riadh, the capital of the Wahabi independent Sultans of Central Arabia. These men are not only independent of the Sultans of Constantinople, but once even took possession of Mecca, whence they were driven out by Egyptian troops. The Hindustani fanatics of Mulka with whom we had so much trouble during the Umbeylah campaign were Mahommedans of this sect. The Wahabis are Mahommedan

Reformers (one might almost call them Puritans), and wish everything to be restored to the state of things which existed in the time of Mahomet. They object to handsome mosques and minarets, and to many of the observances which have overlaid primitive Mahommedanism, and especially to the worship and honour paid to Mahommedan saints, or even to Mahommed himself.

After a few days spent at the Consulate at Bushire, Col. Smith arranged his caravan, and we rode on our horses to Shiraz. It is about 120 miles from Bushire to Shiraz, but there is no "chapper" or Government post on this road, as there is in most parts of Persia, the road being supposed to be too bad even for post horses.

I have had a very wide experience of bad roads in Persia during my residence of about 12 years in that country, but anything to approach the state of the roads from Bushire to Shiraz after we had first entered the mountains (which we did on our second day's march from Bushire), I could not have believed possible. How any four-footed beast got over it I do not know. Certainly the multitudes of dead donkeys and mules whose bodies lined the road proved at what a sacrifice of these poor beasts the crossing of these mountains is made. We sent on our baggage the day before we started ourselves, and rode out a double march, overtaking our baggage-train at Barasjaon, near which place a battle had taken place in our war with Persia in 1856.

A most amusing account of this battle, or rather of the part he himself had taken in it, was given by a Persian colonel of cavalry with whom we dined on

Our rides on the several marches we made through the mountains were pleasant so far as climate was concerned, but the Kotul-Pir-i-Zun pass, and the Kotul Dochtur pass, were each one more terrible than the other. Some four marches from Shiraz we were met by Lieut. St John who gave us an account of his having been attacked by a lioness while travelling down one of these passes. We however, though we looked for lions never had the luck to see one. There is a curious circumstance connected with lions and tigers in Persia. Lions are only found in the extreme south of Persia, while tigers are never found except in the extreme north on the Russian border. I have, after a good deal of study on the subject, come to the conclusion that the lion is a bonafide tropical beast, and has been so from the earliest times, whilst the tiger, on the other hand, is an intruder from the north in those countries where he is now found. Tigers seem to have come originally from a cold country ; they are plentiful in the more southern parts of Siberia, in Corea, and even in the island of Saghalien, but they do not appear to have been found in the south until comparatively modern times. There is no Sanscrit word for tiger, though there is for lion, while we read of the Assyrian kings slaying lions, but we never hear of their killing a tiger. We only hear of tigers in India in mediæval times and later. They are not found in Ceylon, which was evidently separated from India before the arrival of tigers, and I believe they were not found on the island of Singapore till after 1820. I think, therefore, we must look upon the tiger as being, like ourselves, an emigrant from the north, and as having



come from Manchuria. The lion in India seems formerly to have had a much wider range than is the case to-day, and now a few lions in Guzerat seem to be the only representatives of that race. I remember reading in an Indian newspaper, some forty years ago, of a lion having been killed not far from Allahabad, and I believe in the last century (*i.e.* the XVIIIth) lions were not uncommon in some parts of India.

We reached Shiraz after a not unpleasant march of eleven days, and I was invited to stay with Lieut. St John (afterwards Sir Oliver St John, of Kandahar fame). We called upon the Prince-Governor, the uncle of the late Shah, who had the title of "Hissam-i-Sultaneh," or Sword-of-the-State. He had previously been Governor-General of Khorasan, and had been the primary cause of the war with Great Britain in 1856, as we had objected to his taking the city of Herat from the Afghans. He was not supposed to be particularly friendly with the English; however, when Col. Smith called with the various presents he had been entrusted with in Bombay, we were received with great politeness and apparent cordiality. We dined at the palace with two of his colonels, from one of whom I heard the story, given above, of the fight with our troops near Barasjam.

The gardens in the neighbourhood of Shiraz are very famous, and they are well worth seeing. We visited the grave of the celebrated Persian poet, Sheikh Sadi Shirazi, and also that of the equally renowned Hafiz. Hafiz, by the way, is not strictly a name at all, but merely a title bestowed on anyone who can repeat the Koran by heart.

We saw at Shiraz a performance given by some lion tamers with a young and also a full-grown one. A small boy lay down on the ground, and was more or less covered by half a sheep being laid upon him. The young lion on being let loose, threw himself on the sheep, tore it in pieces, and devoured it, a process which, I could not help thinking, must have been rather unpleasant for the boy. Of course the boy was quite unhurt as the lion was well trained. Lieut. St John asked the lion-tamer which required the most beating before they learnt this trick, the lion or the boy. He laughed, but made no reply.

The post-road to Ispahan, which would have led us by Persepolis, the old capital of Persia, was very hot, so Col. Smith decided to travel by a much cooler route through the mountains. Our caravan was accompanied by the son of the chief of one of the largest and most powerful of the Elliat or nomad tribes of this part of Persia. His father supplied him with a large body of horse from the Persian army. He was a fine young fellow, and both rode and shot decidedly well. He was armed with a smooth bore gun, which he would load with a bullet, then, making a servant throw up a halfpenny, fired and hit it at the first shot, a decidedly difficult feat. He, of course, knew the country well, and we were therefore well received wherever we went. We accompanied him a fairly long march into the last post-station before we reached Ispahan, and then, changing our tired horses for post-horses, we drove twenty-seven miles into Ispahan, where we halted one day, and the next evening started to ride for Teheran, 274 miles distant. We rode all that night,

and halted the following day during the heat. We repeated this procedure each day, riding only at night and resting in the daytime, eventually reaching Teheran on the third morning in time for breakfast, having covered the 274 miles from Ispahan in about sixty hours. We had breakfast at Col. Smith's house in Teheran, where several of his friends met us. After breakfast there arose the question what should be done that day, and it was proposed that we should ride out to Col. Smith's country house situated about nine miles off at Tejreesh, which we did at once, and as soon as we arrived there I had a delightful swim in a swimming-bath. While we were swimming, some members of the Russian legation came to see us, and on hearing that the first thing we did on arriving at Teheran, after 274 miles' ride, was to ride out to Tejreesh, said, "That is thoroughly English, no other nation would think of the amusement of going out to ride after just having done 274 miles."

I took two good nights' sleep at Teheran, and then started with post-horses for Resht on the Caspian Sea, having decided to return to England by the Volga route. I reached Resht, over 200 miles, in three days, and proceeded by steamer to Baku. I was most kindly received at Enzelli by the Russian Consul, Mr Pauloff, and the following day started by the Russian mail steamer for Baku, where I arrived on the third day.

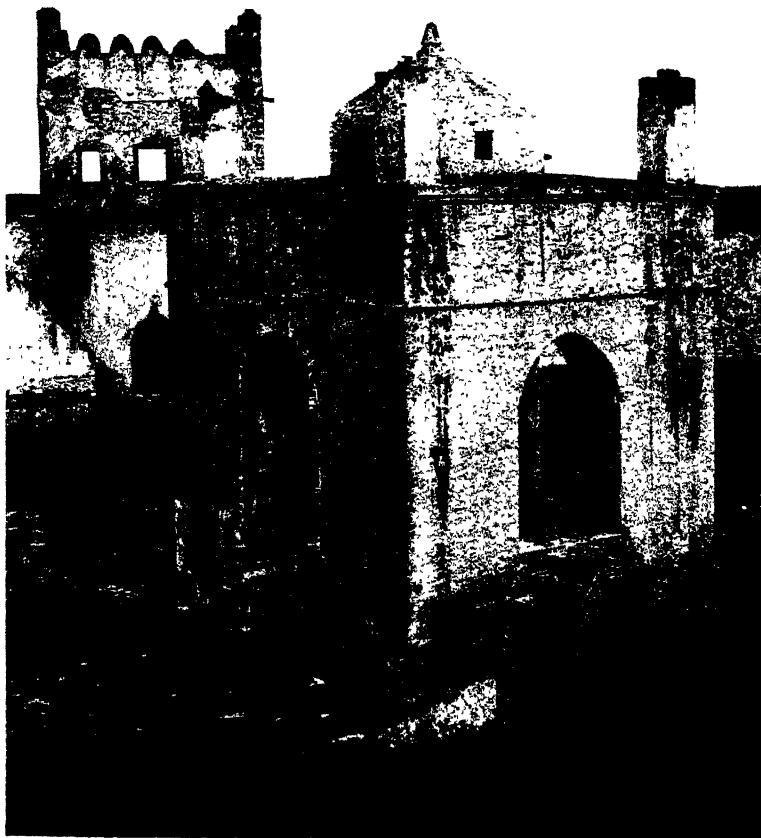
In July 1866, Baku was not the important place that it has since become. It was then quite a small town, and there were only two sets of wells working, one at Balakaneh, and the other at Surukhaneh. I dined at the Russian club, where I met the

Governor, who was most civil. The next day I drove out to Surukhaneh and saw the petroleum factory there, which interested me much, as it was quite new to me. At this refinery was situated what was known as "The Temple of the Everlasting Fire,"\* one of the sights of Baku. The petroleum refinery had been placed here for the purpose of utilizing the natural petroleum gas which rose from fissures in the soil. For ages a so-called everlasting fire had been kept burning and watched by Hindu priests from India.

The spot where the gas rose from the ground had been enclosed by a wall, and a small temple built in the midst. Around the wall were cells for the priests who attended the fire, and also for Hindu visitors, who came here after visiting the Temple of Jawala Mukhi in the Kangra district of the Punjab. The Kangra Temple of the Flame-faced Goddess is well-known in India. The enclosure at Baku was similar in many respects to a Punjabi Dharamsálá.

In 1866 one Hindu priest alone watched the fire, although previously three priests had always been there, but not long before my visit the senior priest or Abbot of the Dharamsálá, if I may so call him, had been murdered by Tartars for the sake of the money he had collected from Hindu devotees and other visitors to the temple, for though, of course, not an object of veneration, it was regarded with

\* The following account of this Temple has been taken from a paper written by Col. Stewart for the Royal Asiatic Society, April, 1897. The thanks of the Editor are due to the Society for their kind permission to make use of this paper.



HINDU FIRE-TEMPLE AT BAKU

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an odd blend of superstition and curiosity by the neighbouring Mahommedans.

After the murder of the Abbot, one of the surviving priests fled, but the third remained to tend the fire, which was merely a pipe in the ground connecting with the naturally rising gas, and this pipe was contained in one of the cells built round the wall.

In the centre of the enclosure a much more modern building stood. This did not contain the fire, but was dedicated to the god Siva, as was shown by Siva's iron trident, fastened on the roof.

The Hindu priest who remained was very delighted to find I spoke Punjabi, his native language. He had come from some place north of Delhi, and had formerly been a priest at the Jowalla Mukhi Temple, near Kangra. He said he there heard from other priests of this greater Jawala Ji, as he called it, and had come on a pilgrimage to visit it, and remained for many years. He was, however, anxious to leave, and wished to accompany the Hindu trader from Scinde, who was travelling on board the steamer with me. He attempted to leave by our steamer, but was detained by the Russian authorities because his passport was not in order.

I returned to Baku in 1881, and again visited this temple, when I found the fire out and no priest in attendance. The engineer in charge of the neighbouring petroleum refinery accompanied me over the temple, of which he held the key. He relit the fire, but carefully extinguished it on leaving the building, as he said he wanted all the natural petroleum gas for heating the furnaces of his own works. He also informed me that since my previous

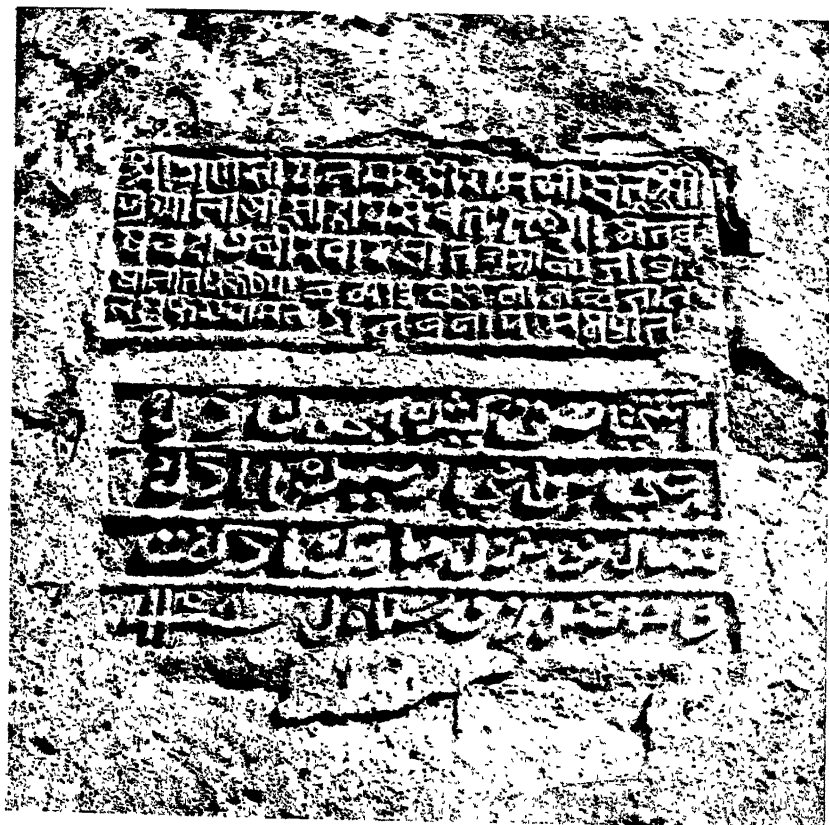
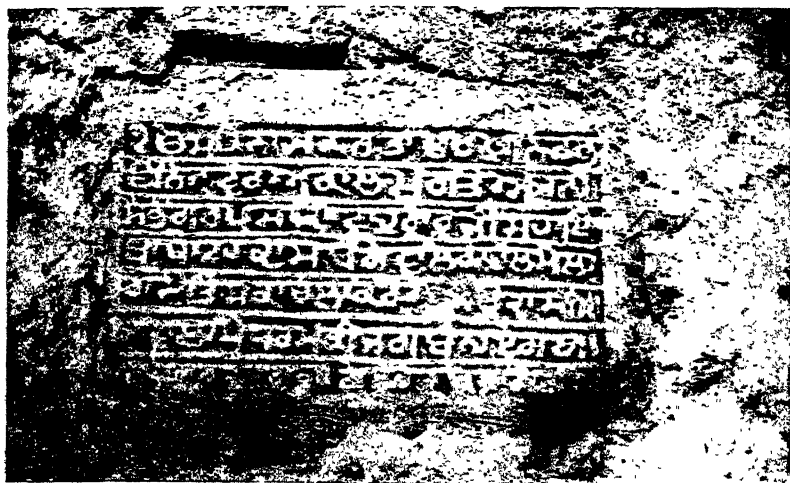
visit a new priest had arrived from India and taken charge of the temple for a time, but soon left again. On this occasion I found on the floor close to the fire a small copper tablet with a figure of the elephant-handed god Gunpatti deeply engraved on it. I have visited this temple many times since, as I had resided in Baku for some months, and on one occasion I took a photographer with me, and had some of the inscriptions photographed. There were stone-cut inscriptions over the doors of most of the cells of the Dharamsálá, and one over the entrance to the Sun Temple.

Most of the inscriptions were in the Nagari character, and I was able from a very slight knowledge of Nagari to read the invocation "Ai Sri Ganesha" on one of them. There was also an inscription in Persian character. I got copies of all of them except the one over the Siva temple, which was too high up.

Two of the best of my photos were lost, including the one I was able partially to read; photographs of the others are here given. I am unable personally to read them, and I publish them in the hope that some more capable person may be able to do so. The date on the inscription in Persian character, 1158, is of course legible, and no doubt refers to the building of the much more modern Siva temple. The inscription, from what I have been told by others by whom it has been partially read, seems to be in Hindi of a modern form, but I think the Dharamsálá is of considerably older date than this inscription.

There can be no doubt that this temple is not,







and never can have been, a Zoroastrian temple. I have, after seeing it, visited a real Zoroastrian temple in southern Persia, which, although no longer in use, had only been abandoned a few years previously, and was in perfect repair. It was situated on a high mound, and was of a totally different form from this temple.

In the country between the Gurgan and the Attrek rivers, near the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, and also in the northern part of Khorasan, near the Attrek river, I saw great mounds near each village which tradition amongst the people states were the sites of fire-temples, and I have seen one near Mahomedabad, in Daraguez, with some remains of a fire-temple of the same pattern as the one I had seen in southern Persia, but these Zoroastrian temples are always placed on high mounds, and not on a plain as the Baku temple is.

Baron Thielman in his work speaks of the Baku temple as if it were a Zoroastrian temple, but I feel certain he is mistaken. He apparently saw the same priest there as I met in 1866, but he was only able to speak to him through an interpreter, while I spoke to the man in his native language and saw a good deal of him.

At Khaf, in Khorasan, near the Afghan border, I met two Hindu fakirs from India, who told me they were on a pilgrimage to this Baku Jawala Ji. Also, some of the Hindu traders settled at Khaf (where I resided for six months), when I left that place for England in 1882, begged to be allowed to accompany me as far as Baku for the purpose of visiting this temple. Although the Hindus I have

met in Persia know about this temple, I never heard any Zoroastrian in Persia (although I met many) express any wish to visit it, or that he even had any knowledge of its existence.

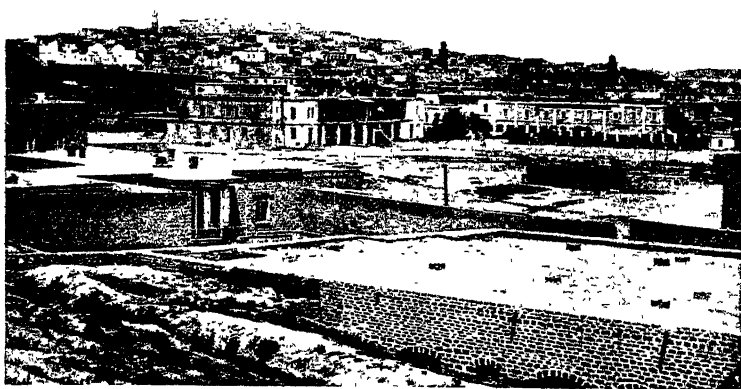
A Hindu fakir, whom I met near the Afghan frontier of Persia, told me he proposed to visit not only the Jawala Ji at Baku, but also another Hindu fire-temple which he had heard of in Bokhara territory.

We know, besides the well-known example of the Fire-temple at Kangra, that the Hindus certainly in ancient times worshipped fire. At page 27 of Tod's *Annals of Rajasthan*, it is mentioned that three of the sons of Icshwaca, of the Solar Race, abandoned worldly affairs and took to religion, and that one of these sons, Canin by name, was said to have been the first who made an "agnihotra" or "pyreum," and worshipped fire.

I am anxious that some one, who is more of an orientalist than myself, should take up the matter of the inscriptions on this temple, and although I think none of the inscriptions are very ancient, still they appear to be considerably older than the one giving the date 1158, which I suppose to be A.H. ('Hijrah') (A.D. 1744), and which seems only to refer to the Siva temple, and is probably more modern than the rest.

The general form of this Baku Fire-Temple reminded me very much of the temple amongst the ruins known as Bil Rajah Kafir Kot, on the Indus, which I once visited.

On leaving Baku, I went by a Russian sea-going steamer to Neuin Fus, at the mouth of the Volga,



BAKU

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where I changed for a river steamer, which took us to Astrakhan. Here I met a very pleasant Armenian gentleman, who spoke German well, and also a little French; he had often been in Manchester on business, and we travelled together as far as Moscow.

After two days' stay at Astrakhan, we embarked in a larger river steamer, and started for Nijni Novgorod, at which place the fair was to commence in a short time. On board the steamer there were all sorts of Asiatics going to the fair, including a Hindu from Scinde, who told me he was proceeding there to sell jewels, and that he had turned Mahommedan while going through Persia. He asked me whether he should turn Christian on travelling through Russia. He was a very drunken sort of fellow, and used to lie on the deck drunk nearly every night. I told him we would certainly not have such a reprobate call himself a Christian. A night or two afterwards, when he was lying, as usual, drunk on the deck, somebody helped himself to his jewels. As I understood Hindustani, he came to me to translate his complaint to the captain, a Russian-German from the Baltic Provinces, to whom I spoke in German. The captain made inquiries, and discovered from one of the stewards that he had seen someone emptying the pockets of the Hindu while he was lying drunk on the deck. The steward pointed out the man, who said at once, "I did take the jewels, but I only took them to take care of them for him. I was afraid, as he was so drunk, someone would steal them." He then gave them back to the Hindu, who was very profuse to me in

his thanks for my assistance. I answered, "As you were in distress I assisted you, but if you ever speak to me again, I will throw you overboard." I was very much ashamed of his drunkenness, as he was the only British subject on board beside myself. On the day we arrived at Nijni Novgorod, I found, that though this was the nominal day of the opening of this great fair, it would not really commence for another twelve days. So I determined to go on to Moscow at once, as I could not afford to lose so much of my six months' leave. I remained some three days at Moscow seeing the sights, and then went on to St Petersburg.

I travelled on by Berlin and Brussels to England, where I arrived in July, 1866, after an absence of more than thirteen years. I took a Russian acquaintance, whom I had met on the road, down to Aldershot, and I showed him all that was to be seen at that camp, where my brother, Captain Algernon Stewart, was captain of a field battery.

On my return to Calcutta on the 18th of the following November, as I was getting into a boat to land from the steamer I had what might have proved a very nasty accident. It was about nine o'clock in the evening and very dark. In stepping into the boat from the steamer I slipped and fell overboard; the current was running very strong, and just there in the Hoogly there is a very nasty undertow. A friend of mine had had a similar accident about a month before and was drowned, but I am thankful to say, as I went down, I caught one of the mooring ropes, so I was very soon fished out. I proceeded up country after a few days at



## MY JOURNEY HOME ACROSS PERSIA 101

Calcutta and rejoined my regiment of the 5th P.I. at Kohat.

In June, 1868, some new leave rules were made granting us two years' furlough in ten, and as I had only had six months leave in the whole of my service, I was granted eighteen months' furlough to England.

## CHAPTER IX

### MY JOURNEY TO INDIA ACROSS SYRIA : THE JOWAKI CAMPAIGN

AFTER my marriage in 1869, I returned to India by a rather unusual route. We started from Dover on 14th September 1869, went by train to Donauwert, the place where the Danube first becomes navigable, and then by steamer down that river. Travellers extol the beauty of the Rhine, but I think the Danube is really more beautiful. Near the 'iron gates' the river became so shallow that, after changing several times to a smaller vessel, we had at last to give the steamer up altogether, and go along the bank in waggons, finally taking another steamer lower down in which we proceeded as far as Rustchuk in Bulgaria, from whence we took train to the port of Varna. My wife, as the steamer proceeded, made many sketches of both banks of the river.

She also made a sketch of the remains of a tower constructed by the Emperor Septimus Severus to defend the bridge built over the Danube by the Emperor Trajan about A.D. 150.

At Varna we took the steamer for Constantinople,

which we reached the next day, and spent a few days driving about to see the sights of Stamboul.

We then embarked in a *Messagerie Maritime* steamer for Alexandretta, calling on the way at the island of Mitylene, where I landed for a few hours. We then went on to Smyrna where we stayed two days.

I append a sketch of an Assyrian rock-cut head, found near Smyrna, which was drawn by my wife.



ASSYRIAN ROCK-CUT HEAD AT SMYRNA

This rock-hewn sculpture marks the most westerly point attained by Assyrian art.

After leaving Smyrna, the ship called at the island of Rhodes, but we did not land. At the end of the mole at Rhodes was a tower whose name struck us a good deal. It was called Sir John Bull's Tower; and it is said that when the island of Rhodes was taken by the Turks from the Knights of Rhodes, a knight named Sir John Bull defended this tower for, I think, forty-eight hours after the rest of the island had been captured. We thought

the name of the English knight, Sir John Bull, very appropriate.

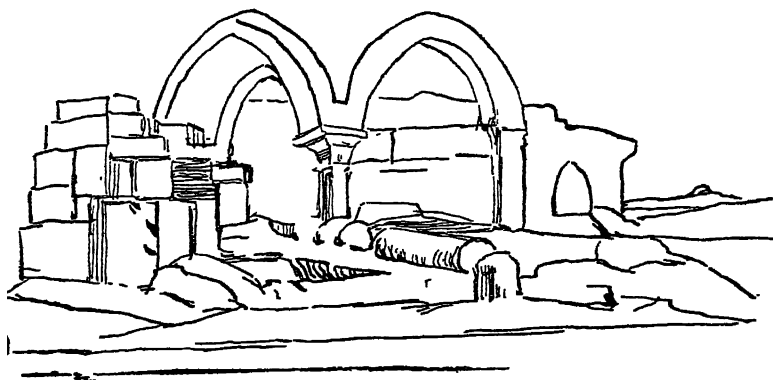
On arriving at Alexandretta we left the ship. We were warned not to sleep in Alexandretta, but to leave it at once, as it is a most feverish place. So we hired horses and mules, passed our baggage through the customs, and left for Aleppo within two hours of our arrival. At Alexandretta we made the acquaintance of a Mr Antonovitch, a Hungarian in the employment of the Turkish Government, on his way to Bagdad, who most kindly interpreted for us, and enabled us to get off. We slept that night at a mountain village named Bailan, not many miles from Alexandretta, in the house of an Armenian.

After a long journey we reached the town of Aleppo. I had a letter of introduction to Mr Skene, the English Consul there who lived some distance out of the town, and on sending it, my wife received a most kind invitation from Mrs Skene for us to come and stay with them. They sent their "kavass" to conduct us to the Consulate, where we stayed some five days making preparations for our journey to Diarbekir in Khurdistan. In Aleppo we purchased a mule litter or "takht-i-ravan"; this was something like an Indian palanquin, but had shafts both before and behind, and was carried by two mules. We engaged a travelling servant at Aleppo, a Greek named Alfred Zobey, who agreed to be our dragoon or interpreter, and to cook for us on the journey. He spoke many languages imperfectly, but none properly, as far as I could discover.

We left Aleppo about the 20th October, 1869,

and proceeded for three days across a desert country, when we reached the Euphrates at a place called Beredjik, where we put up at a caravanserai.

The Euphrates was at this point a wide river, and the boats used for crossing it were most curious. I cannot think they have much altered from those in which Abraham must have crossed in his journey from Padanaram to Palestine. We should have



RUINED MOSQUE NEAR ALEPPO

much liked to go down the Euphrates in one of them, but it was quite impossible at this time, as there was a serious Arab revolt going on, so we crossed the river here and continued our journey to Diarbekir on the Tigris, a journey of eight days.

Sunday, October 24th, 1869. We spent a happy Sunday, halting at Hervat. It is not far from here to Urfah, which is by some supposed to be the Urr of the Chaldeas. We read Abraham's history, which was very interesting so near his ancestral home.

Urfah is the Edessa of crusading times. One

cannot but feel how brave must have been the Christian princes and nobles of Edessa to hold so advanced a post against the Saracen hordes when the whole chivalry of Christendom found it so difficult to hold Jerusalem and Palestine, which were close to the sea, and where a much larger force could be assembled. The people of Edessa became Christians in very early times. Armenians attribute their conversion to St. Thomas the Apostle, and they have a tradition that the then King of Edessa wrote a letter to Our Saviour, saying that, if the Jews did not accept Him, the people of Edessa would if He would come there. But this, I fancy, is a mere tradition.

October 27th. We had a very long day, not getting in till very late. No one seemed to know where the village for which we were bound was situated; the muleteers got very much out of temper, and everything seemed going wrong. At last Mr Antonovitch found the site of the village quite deserted, so we encamped there. We had fortunately brought some charcoal from Severeck, and the muleteers had a sack of barley for their mules. There was plenty of water here where we halted. Neither my two men, who accompanied the takht-i-ravan, nor the muleteers would render us any assistance in pitching the tent, so Mr Antonovitch's servant, my servant Alfred Zobe, and myself had to do it ourselves.

October 28th. To-day was a long day indeed, thirteen hours travelling. We were encamped on the top of a mountain, which looked like Shaick Budeen, near Dera Ismail Khan, when that place

is looking its best in the spring. The descent was very bad indeed, and the men with the takht-i-ravan (mule-litter) were most troublesome, managing it so badly that it kept swinging from side to side. At last they threatened to stop at a village that we came to, and I had to use all my persuasive powers, combined with the sight of my revolver, to get them to go on. My wife spent about two hours in the litter, and then mounted her horse, as we wished to get into Diarbekir before dark. We went on and on, and it became quite late, when at last we caught sight of Diarbekir in the distance, a fine mediaeval-looking, fortified town, with high brick walls and towers at short intervals. There was a lurid light in the sky after sunset, like that of a great fire, and flashes of lightning broke out at intervals. When we eventually arrived at the city walls, we had to skirt them for a long distance before we could find a gate, and when we did at last find one, it was locked, and the gate-keeper, in spite of money, threats, and oburgations, obstinately refused to open it. So lighting our lanterns, we groped our way round to some gardens where there was a mill, and in the mill we discovered two Turkish policemen, one of whom, on payment of some money, led us down a ravine and by a very bad road half round the town, where we found a gate open. We had lost our mules with the baggage, and I do not know what we should have done if we had not got into the town. We went to the house of M. Pons, the French Vice-Consul, to whom we had had an introduction from his brother.

M. Pons was himself away, but his wife kindly

received us, and did everything possible to make up for the fatigues and anxieties of the day.

The next day I settled with the mule-men, and also arranged for a raft to be constructed to take us down the river to Bagdad, with a tent or cabin of felt on it for the use of my wife. I paid fourteen Turkish pounds for the raft, which sum included two boatmen's wages, but not the bridge fee of ten shillings, which I was to pay at Moosul.

We saw a good deal of Dr Bonelli, the only European doctor here. He was a remarkable man, and said to be very clever, but he was decidedly a little mad, or at all events very eccentric. When his wife, to whom he was devotedly attached, died, he and all his children turned Mahommedan, and he took the name of Wali Effendi. Poor man, I think he is beginning to see what a dreadful mistake he made.

As Dr Bonelli did not think there would be any objection to my wife now leaving after her few days' rest here, but in fact that it would be better for her to do so as soon as possible, Diarbekir being at this season a very unhealthy place, we started on 4th November, down the Tigris on our raft.

It was made of a hundred inflated goat-skins lashed together, over which was laid a deck of branches completed with a small cabin with a wooden floor and frame covered with felts. The cabin was just large enough to take two small camp bedsteads; in front there were two oars and two rowers, though only one rowed at a time until relieved by the other. Beyond the oars there was just room for our servant with his very small



earthen cooking stove, while at the sides were slung our stores, consisting of half a sheep, a basket of vegetables, some bread, and fruit. Mr Antonovitch and a friend of his were on another raft alongside of ours. We rowed until sunset, and then moored to the bank at a small village, where we landed to take a walk, and purchased a goose for our dinner.

We started next day, while it was yet hardly light, at a quarter to six, and rowed until sunset, when we stopped at a village and procured some fowls. There were always a great many cranes, ducks, and pelicans on the river, and their cries in the early morning were most curious, especially the trumpet-like notes of the cranes, as they flew in long lines or rested on the bank. We seldom got a shot at them, as the birds were very wary, and we did not care to lose time by stalking them.

On the third day, the 7th November, we got into the mountains, and the scenery became very fine indeed, far surpassing anything we had seen on the Rhine or Danube. The weather was splendid; there was no fatigue as we went gliding down the stream, while the banks of the Tigris grew finer every hour. We had such lovely nights with the moon, in the earlier part of the night, shining down on us. Mr Antonovitch left us at Jezira, a small town and bazaar with a bridge of boats, about three days' journey above Moosul. On our way we passed the ruins of a Roman bridge in very good preservation. During the latter part of the journey, we got the boatmen to row up to 10 o'clock at night, and on the last two evenings before reaching Moosul they would not stop at a village for the night, saying the

people were bad, and one night we kept ourselves as quiet as possible, and lit no fire, nor did we stop till midnight. We alway kept some sort of a watch, but on these two nights we were particularly on the alert.

We arrived at Moosul on 12th November, about 2 P.M., and sent our letter of introduction to Mr Rassam, the English consul. His "kavass" soon returned with an invitation to go and stay with him, which we accepted. Mrs Rassam, an Englishwoman, did the honours, as Mr Rassam happened to be ill, unfortunately, at the time. They had quite an Eastern palace for a house, with marble walls, and arabesque ceilings.

The day after our arrival at Moosul we went to see Nineveh, and walked over the great mound, examining Layard's excavations, which I walked through. On the right was Beni Yonus, or the tomb of Jonah, with a mosque built over it. The mounds covering the ruins extend for miles and miles above Moosul, and for thirty miles below to Birs Nimroud.

We read several of the accounts of Nineveh in the Bible as we dropped down the river, and were much struck with the fulfilment of the prophecies in them to the very letter. Mrs Rassam, though she had been more than a year at Moosul, had never before visited Nineveh, and so she accompanied us there, We rode very nice horses belonging to Mr Rassam which he kindly lent us, and on our return from Nineveh we dismounted at the bridge of boats over the Tigris, and got on board our raft. We paddled on down-stream until about 11 P.M., when we stopped and moored at a sandbank in the river.

We had changed our boatmen at Moosul, leaving the two Kurds who had accompanied us thus far, and shipping two Arabs in their place. I liked the Arabs much better than the Kurds, though I had no cause of complaint against the latter.

We started very early on the morning of the 14th, I think about 4 a.m. About 11 o'clock a.m. we came to the rapids formed by the great dam built in ancient times opposite Birs Nimroud to fill the various canals which watered the plain around by keeping the Tigris at a certain height. At present it forms a dangerous impediment to the navigation of the river. The Turkish Government have often intended blowing it up, but the expense, which would be at the lowest some £4,000, has always stood in the way of its being done. We got out and walked about half a mile and watched our little raft making quite a jump over the falls with the tremendous rush of water. Just after we got on board again, we passed an Arab village from whence we were hailed and ordered by some Turkish soldiers to stop and take a man on board our raft. As the people accompanying the two soldiers looked a ruffianly crew, and I had no intention of being ordered about by them, I refused, saying I would fire upon any one who attempted to use force to stop us. This threat effectively reduced them to a more humble frame of mind, and they begged us, for pity's sake, to take the soldier, who had been left behind by a boat, on board until we should meet the boat to which he belonged. We finally agreed to take him, and he turned out to be not at all a bad fellow, named David (Daod) and belonged,

as we afterwards found out, to a Turkish man-of-war vessel which was surveying the river.

Soon after leaving this village, it came on to blow so hard that we decided to stop at the next place we came to, as we were making hardly any way, and were only wearing out the men's strength rowing. We landed at a little village where we had a short walk, and left again about sunset. Just as we were departing, we heard there was a Turkish steamer close to us, which news caused great excitement, as we hoped to be taken on board. So we pushed on at once, feeling pretty certain of overtaking her, as I knew a steamer would be very unlikely to proceed at night. At the end of a couple of hours we reached the boat, and found it was no steamer, but only a Turkish man-of-war barge surveying the river to find out whether steamers could come up to Moosul. It was a disappointment, but we made the best of it. The Turkish naval captain, Hussein Effendi, who proved a very good fellow, took us on board, and promised to get us to Bagdad, if we had a favourable breeze, in three days. Just then a strong breeze sprang up, and we set sail at once, but after going at a great pace for about an hour, the wind suddenly dropped, and we were obliged to stop for the night.

The next morning we had a slight though favourable breeze, and with both oars and sails made but slow progress. The Tigris was not nearly so fine a river when we were approaching Bagdad, as it had been on its upper course, and the population on the bank, from Moosul downwards, spoke Arabic and not Khurdish, which had been the language

above that place. We pitched a little tent on board the boat for my wife where she would be quite private, and the captain and all the crew were very kind to us. As we floated down the river we passed many mounds, the sites of ruined cities, proving how populous this part of the world had once been. We saw bitumen oozing out of the banks of the river, and floating as a scum over the river for long distances. This made us think of the Tower of Babel in Gen. xi. v. 3, which says, "And they had brick for stone, and slime (bitumen) for mortar." In the old buildings about here wherever strength was required, bitumen was used for mortar, the bricks being only sun-dried. There were great numbers of wild pigs about here, and sometimes we got shots at them as we went along. We might as well have stayed in our killick so far as rate of progress was concerned, for Mr Antonovitch's killick, which left Moosul a day after us, reached Bagdad a few hours before us. We had got on board the man-of-war barge as it was safer, and we felt more comfortable at night having an armed sentry. There were five sailors of the Turkish navy on board, and three river boatmen; the sailors were very good fellows, and worked very hard on but one poor meal a day. I was much struck by their variety of colour; the coxswain, an Albanian, was a very fair man with blue eyes. He was a smart sailor, and had been round the Cape of Good Hope and in South America, so for a Turkish sailor had seen a good deal of the world. Besides him we had a Circassian on board, while the captain was a real Turk from Constantinople, a handsome man,

and not darker than many Englishmen. We had also Arabs from Moosul, and men with a good deal of Khurdish character about them, who were dark. After being in the boat one week, we arrived at Bagdad on Sunday, the 21st November. The captain told me he had been attacked once on the voyage from Moosul at an Arab village, two days before we had joined them.

We arrived at Bagdad very early in the morning. As it was evident the captain did not care to face his friends with us on board as passengers, he put us into the most primitive boat I ever saw, being merely a large round basket of ordinary wickerwork, pitched inside and outside with a thick coat of bitumen, into which, while still soft, cowrie shells had been forced, forming curious patterns. It was the same sort of thing, only much larger and stronger, as that in which Moses had been placed on the Nile as a baby. This conveyance, you may suppose, did not progress forward very fast, being more inclined to merely revolve round and round, and this, coupled with delays at the custom house, caused us not to reach the Consulate till about 10.30 a.m., though we had arrived at Bagdad very early in the morning. Colonel Herbert, the Consul General, and Mrs Herbert were most kind and hospitable. He was an officer of the Bengal Staff Corps like myself, and was celebrated in India for having held the Fort at Attock in 1848 with only a few Afghan levies against a whole Sikh army, and only finally surrendered when his levies deserted him. I knew a man, Shahzada Mohammed Zumboor, of one of the royal families of Cabul,

and assistant commissioner at Kohat, who had been with Colonel Herbert in this defence of Attock against the Sikhs.

I rode about Bagdad and saw all there was to be seen, but thought the bazaars inferior to those of Constantinople or even Aleppo. I purchased a very nice Arab horse, which we named Khalif. He was a horse from the Shamour Arab tribe, a five year old, and very good looking. He proved a good horse, and I rode him a long time in India.

While we were at Bagdad, Mrs Herbert gave a dance to celebrate the arrival of my wife, who was the first lady to come to Bagdad from Europe by land. Most of the ladies who came to the dance spoke no English, only Arabic, and neither Mrs Herbert nor my wife spoke Arabic. These two ladies took it in turn to play dance music on a harmonium, the only musical instrument we had.

On the 24th November, 1869, we went on board a river steamer late in the evening, and found a capital cabin ready for our reception. I never saw so fine a cabin, it was more like a room, and was divided in two, so as to form a sitting-room and bedroom.

We left Bagdad early the next morning. There were five European passengers on board and about 150 deck passengers of various races and nationalities, amongst them some Afghans and many natives of India returning from a pilgrimage to Mashed-i-Hussain, which is near Bagdad. I spoke to the Afghans in their own language, which they were astonished to hear spoken by an Englishman so far from their homes. This steamer, though a very

small one, carried fifty-three horses on her deck, mine amongst them. The crew were almost all Armenians, from a little village above Moosul. The purser was a Mr Svobody, whose father, a very old Hungarian, we had met at Bagdad. The son told us his father had been warned by an astrologer before he left Hungary, that he would go to a very far country, that he would gain a great fortune, then lose it all, and would finally be eaten by a lion. Mr Svobody has had all these things happen to him except the last. He had found a great treasure buried in a house at Bagdad, but it was taken from him by the Turkish Government, who claim all treasure trove. The old gentleman himself informed me that as so much of the prophecy had come true, he feared the final catastrophe also would happen, and on that account never ventured to go outside the walls of Bagdad. Lions are not uncommon in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, but it certainly would be a curious coincidence if the whole of the prophecy were fulfilled.

The country on both banks of the river was very sparsely inhabited and uninteresting. On the left bank of the river we passed a building known as Ezra's tomb. This is a great place of pilgrimage for the Jews of Bagdad, though I could not discover that the prophet Ezra had any connection with the tomb, though along the banks of the Tigris one is shown many reputed tombs of wonderful antiquity. I mentioned before that at Nineveh, near Moosul, we had been shown Jonah's tomb, and at the same place they offered to show me Seth's tomb, but I declined even to go and see that. Jonah may be



considered almost modern in comparison with Seth !

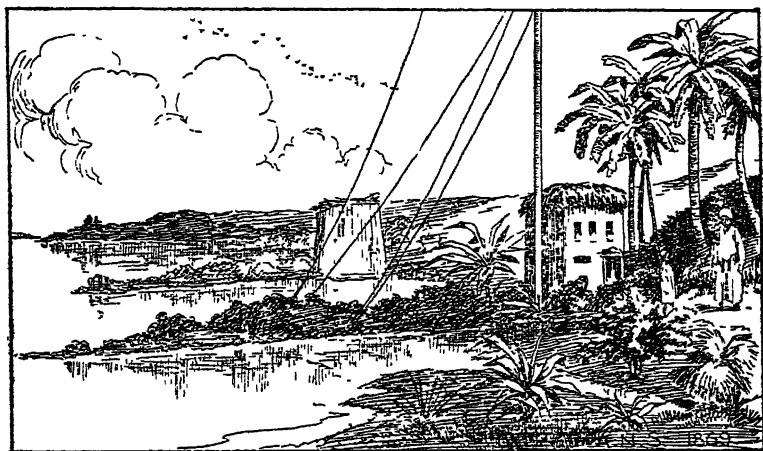
After a few days the steamer reached the point where the Tigris joined the Euphrates, and from here onwards the river is known as the 'Shutt-el-Arabi,' or Arab river. We landed here and walked about a little, as this spot where the Tigris and Euphrates meet, is said to have formed part of the Garden of Eden, now it is only remarkable for a few palm trees, from which we cut some leaves, and from the mid-ribs of these leaves formed walking-sticks, which we presented to some of our friends.

A few days afterwards we arrived at Busra, and went to the British Consulate, where we were most kindly received by Mr Robertson, the British Consul at Busra. In the few days I was at Busra I was able to be useful to Mr Robertson, who did not speak Hindustani, but only Arabic, in translating for him the evidence of Hindustani witnesses in the case of an Indian ship which had been plundered by Arab pirates.

After two days a British sea-going steamer arrived and took us on board and also a number of Arab horses. We remained at the Persian port of Mahamere, which is close to Busra, some hours, but did not land there. After leaving Mahamere, we soon got into the open sea, and after a couple of days reached Bushire, where we landed and walked about the place.

The next day we arrived at Bunder-Abbas, and on the 8th December left that port for Muscat, which is situated, not on the Persian coast, but on the Arab coast on the other side of the Persian Gulf.

Muscat is under the protection of Great Britain and we have a British Consulate there. It is a place of considerable importance, and has much trade, especially in pearls which are fished on the neighbouring island of Bahrein, but are chiefly sold at Muscat. From Bahrein we went to Gwadur on the coast of Baluchistan, where we landed some European



SUPPOSED SITE OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN

passengers, and finally arrived at Karachi on the 14th December, two days before my leave expired.

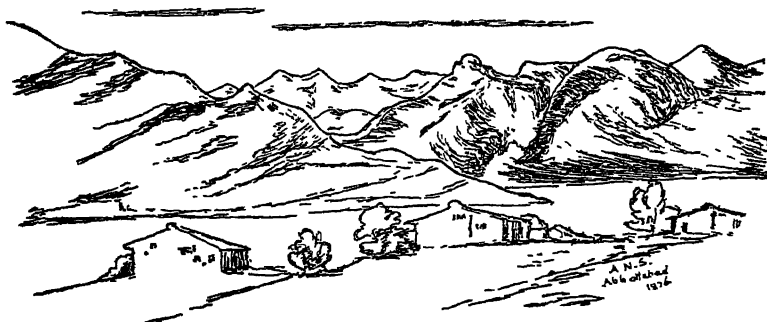
From Karachi we went by train to Kotrie on the Indus, where we embarked on a river steamer for Moultan, taking the horse that I purchased at Bagdad on board the steamer with us. About 23rd January, 1870, we arrived at Moultan, where we stayed at the dak bungalow for a few days to complete our preparations for the journey to Dera Ismail Khan, where my regiment, the 5th P.I., was quartered.

In the spring of 1872 my regiment marched down to Dera Ghazi Khan. Once during our stay at Dera Ismail Khan in the winter, my wife and I made an excursion to some remarkable ruins called Bil Rajah Kafir Kot, situated on a hill not far from the Indus. My wife made a drawing of these ruins, which are of a Buddhistic character, and had evidently been built at a time when Buddhism in this part of the world was giving place to Hindooism, as the buildings partake somewhat of the character of both. It had evidently been a 'Dharam Sala' somewhat in the style of the celebrated Hindoo fire temples at Baku, which I have already described elsewhere.

While stationed at Dera Ghazi Khan, my wife and I paid a visit to a camp of exercise, which was assembled at Delhi to greet the Prince of Wales on his visit to India. We stayed at Delhi in a tent in the camp of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab with the MacLeans. Captain MacLean was at this time Military Secretary to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and most kindly invited us to stay with them. While at this camp we saw a good deal of Sir Bartle Frere, who was an old friend of my wife's, and had accompanied the Prince of Wales to India.

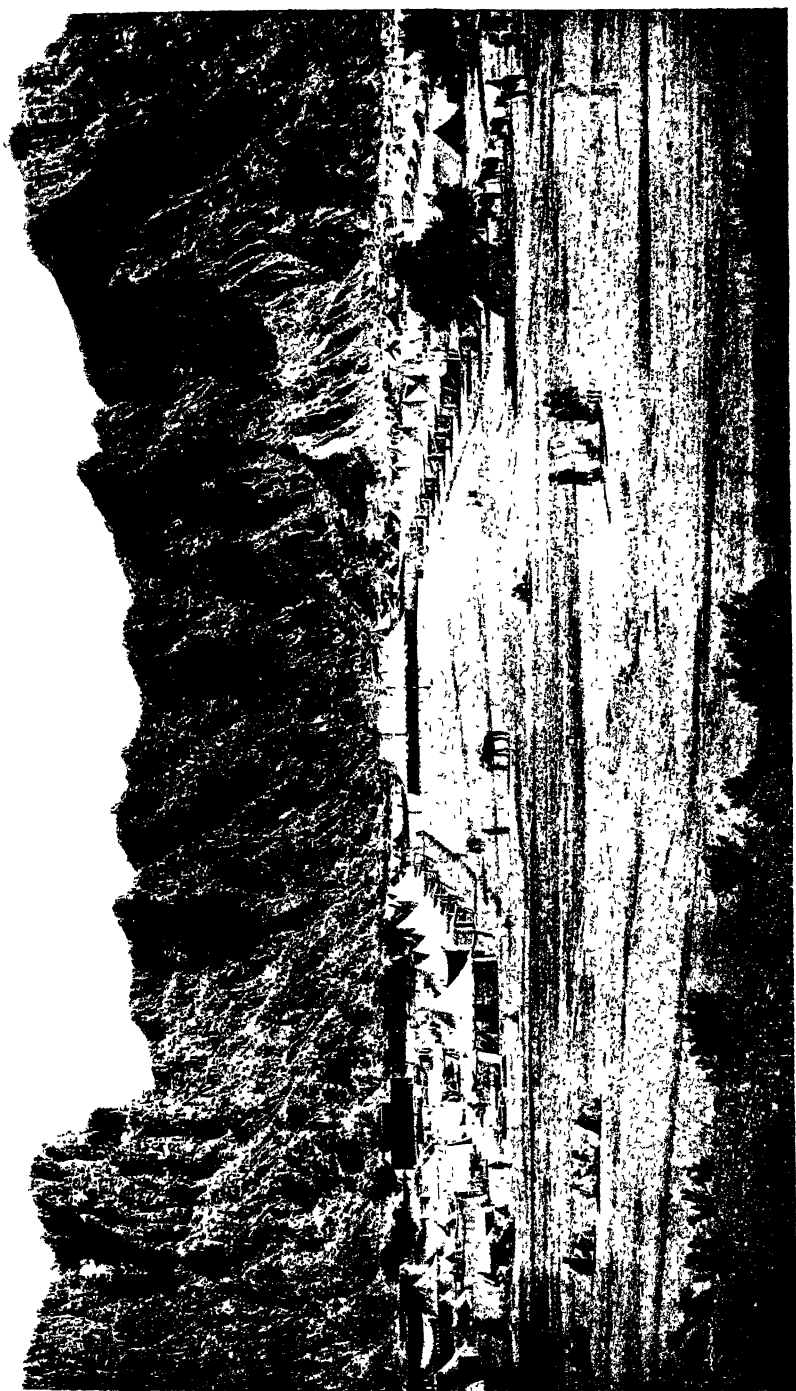
On my return to Dera Ghazi Khan after three months' leave during the summer, I was appointed to command the escort of Sir Henry Davies as Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab during his winter tour in the Punjab. The escort consisted of two companies of the 5th P.I. and P.C. I was directed to join the Lieutenant-Governor's camp at Lahore, and we marched from Dera Ghazi Khan to Moultan,

and then entrained for Lahore. Soon after we reached Lahore, Lord Northbrook, the Governor-General, arrived there, and we formed part of his escort, extra precautions being taken, because, since the murder of Lord Mayo in the Andamans, an idea seemed to prevail that an attempt to kill the Governor-General might be made. I do not think, however, there was the slightest reason for this idea. I accompanied the Lieutenant-Governor's camp during that winter over



a large portion of the Punjab, especially on the frontier, and also to the camp of exercise at Hussan Abdal. This was a very enjoyable winter for us, travelling about the Punjab.

The 5th Punjab Infantry were stationed for two years at Abbottabad. From this place not only Murree, but Sreenuggar in Kashmir, can easily be reached. I purchased from the Government two acres of ground at a place called Batungie, in a most beautiful situation in the forest, two miles from Bara Gully, a small hill station on the road between Abbottabad and Murree, and built myself a small but very pretty house. Some of the happiest days of



CAMP OF THE LIEUT. GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB AT HUSSAN ABDAL



my life were spent at Batungie, the climate being very good, while my wife and two boys enjoyed excellent health.

In September 1877, I went to Srinagar on fifteen days' leave, and while there, I received a letter saying there was a rising of the Jowaki Afreedi tribe, near Kohat, and that the 5th P.I. had left Abbottabad to go there on service, and I was to join as soon as possible. I started off at once, and reached Abbottabad on the fourth day. Then, travelling as fast as possible to Attock on the Indus, where a friend kindly lent me an English rowing boat, I dropped down the river in a few hours, and overtook my regiment a little above Kushalghurh, at its camp a few miles from the Indus. I was delighted to overtake it on the first day it had got across the river, and the Jowaki campaign may be said to have commenced that day, as the Jowakis attacked our pickets that very night. After a few days we were directed to march up a small pass opposite our camp, and join a force under Sir Charles Keyes in the Jowaki country. We did so, getting a little fighting on the road. We had constant skirmishing with the Jowakis throughout that winter, the different regiments occupying various neighbouring villages, and we occasionally made excursions further and further into the mountains, meeting with resistance wherever we went. A force from Peshawur was acting against the Jowakis on the other side of the mountains, and finally they fought their way through the Jowaki country and joined us.

One day I had rather an exciting adventure. News was brought to the 5th P.I. that a party of Jowakis

were attacking our artillery and cavalry grass-cutters, who were cutting down some fields of Indian corn for the horses and mules. I was sent with Lieut. Gaisford and a party of the 5th P.I. to attack a large body of Jowakis, who were firing on our grass-cutters from a neighbouring hill. I went up this hill, and left half my men at one point, where, if I had to retire, I should require them to cover my retreat. With the remaining fifty men I went on a considerable distance driving the Jowakis in front of us. Presently, when we came to a point near a Jowaki village, a large party of the enemy, about eight times as numerous as my own, suddenly turned round and attacked us, and for some twenty minutes a severe fight ensued. I called upon my men to fix bayonets and charge; though they fixed bayonets and took up a strong position, they did not seem inclined to charge. The two bodies thus stood within about forty paces of one another, firing heavily at each other. The leader of the enemy was a fine young priest, who himself fired a shot at me. He sent a bullet through my helmet just where the number of the regiment was, and in doing so knocked it off my head. I stooped down to pick up my helmet; the enemy saw me do so, and thinking I was hit, gave a cheer. At the same moment that the Afghan leader sent a shot through my hat, one of my men returned the compliment and sent a bullet through his head. I saw that the enemy was much discouraged by the fall of their leader, and I gave the word to my men again to charge. This time, I am happy to say, they did so, and led by me and Gaisford, chased the enemy off the hill, and then commenced retiring to our own



camp. On the road I met a considerable party of the 5th P.I. who had been sent to my assistance by Major McQueen.

Sir Charles Keyes was very delighted with the way my men had behaved on this occasion, and personally thanked me. I afterwards received a Brevet Lieutenant-Colonelcy for this affair. Fighting went on for several weeks longer, but finally the Jowakis agreed to the terms we imposed upon them, and the troops returned to quarters. The 5th P.I. did not go back to Abbottabad but were sent to Kohat, and my wife and children joined me there.

Soon after the hot weather commenced I had to go on the sick list, the constant exposure during the winter having tried me very much. The Medical Board was assembled, and I was sent on sick leave to England.

I left Kohat on the 12th of May, 1878, with my wife and children, and went down to Bombay, where we engaged a passage in an American-Lloyd steamer to Trieste, and we left India never to return, though at that time we fully expected to do so.



## PART II

THROUGH PERSIA IN DISGUISE



## PART II

### THROUGH PERSIA IN DISGUISE

#### CHAPTER I

##### FROM TRIESTE TO TREBIZOND

My journey overland from Paris to Trieste, viâ Turin and Venice, needs no description on my part, as it is one with which most of my readers are probably familiar. Trieste, therefore, will be the starting point of my travels and adventures in Persia, undertaken in circumstances which, at the time, were perhaps unique, and which are my excuse for committing them to paper.

Here I went on board the Austrian-Lloyd steamer "Hungaria," bound for Constantinople.

On the 8th March, 1880, we reached Corfu some three and a half hours after sunset. It was too late to land, which was unfortunate, as this was my second visit to the Island of Corfu, and on neither occasion was I able to see it.

We left Corfu at three in the morning, having taken on board a very large number of deck passengers. These consisted chiefly of Albanians,

both Mahommedan and Christian, and a number of Turkish soldiers who were invalids going back to their Asiatic home from Janina, where they were stationed.

About 3 p.m. on the day we left Corfu, it came on to blow, continuing very rough on the 10th, and that night torrents of rain fell, and it was bitterly cold. I felt very sorry for the deck passengers, especially the poor sick Turkish soldiers, who were so good and patient, though many of them were very unwell. I must say I have the greatest admiration for Turkish soldiers, they are so brave in battle, and so patient under hardships. The captain at last put the deck passengers between decks, thus affording them some shelter.

On the 11th March the captain, finding that it was still blowing a gale, and that practically no progress was being made against it, notwithstanding the consumption of a great quantity of coal, ran in under shelter of the Island of Milo and anchored. We could not land as it was blowing so hard, but it was pleasant to be still after having been so tossed about by the sea. We remained at anchor until about 9 p.m. when the wind lulled, and the captain again put to sea.

Early in the morning of the 12th, we steamed into the land-locked bay of Syra, one of the Cyclades, a place of much trade, and evidently a port of call for a multitude of ships. There were many steamers in the port flying the flags of most European countries, and a number of small Greek vessels which had taken refuge from the storm. The "Hungaria" had some 1300 bales or boxes to discharge, besides a large

number to load. The cargo to be discharged seemed to include every sort of European merchandise, but that to be loaded consisted almost entirely of great baskets or crates full of cauliflowers.

Syra is a very desolate-looking island, and most of these vegetables are not grown there, but are brought from a neighbouring island and are exported, not only to Constantinople, but also to Odessa and other places in Russia.

I landed early in the morning at Syra and was surprised to find men and women dancing in the open streets at 7.30 a.m. Syra possesses several manufacturing, steam-cotton mills, steam-flour mills, and some small ship-building yards. I was much struck with the peculiar ugliness of the population of Syra; the type was not what one would have expected in a Greek island, but they looked more like the population of some manufacturing town of Northern Europe, except that they had darker skins. Some of the men were wearing the large red fez\* which I believe was not originally a Turkish or Mahomedan head-dress at all, but was adopted by the Turks from the Greek islands.

We started about three in the afternoon, much hindered in our progress by a strong north wind, and passed close to the island of Delos, once so celebrated for its Temple. About noon on Saturday, the 13th, we entered the Dardanelles, when the sea became rather calmer, but a violent snowstorm setting in, we came to anchor.

It was very rough again when we came to the

\* So-called because they were originally made at Fez, in Morocco, though the African name for this head-dress is "tarbûsh."

Sea of Marmora, and late at night on the 14th we reached Constantinople, but were not allowed to land until the next day.

On the 15th, a bitterly cold day, I landed about 8 A.M. I had been given an introduction to the club at Pera by Mr Pears, a gentleman who was on board the steamer "Hungaria," and who was most kind. This club, situated in the Grand Rue de Pera, was called "Commercial et Maritime." I was soon settled in a bedroom at the club, and after breakfast started out to see Constantinople, first going to Galata to try and get my luggage, but without success. Then I walked across the bridge of boats over the Golden Horn to Stamboul, as the Turkish part of Constantinople is called. This bridge is in just the same dilapidated-looking condition as when I crossed it ten and a half years before, on my way to India. Alongside of it is a fine new iron bridge, which is nearly finished, except for one gap in it, which has been its condition for several years. I was told that just as this bridge was about to be finished, a Turkish ironclad broke through it, and the gap thus made has never been repaired.\* This is Turkey all over; *yavash*, *yavash* (slowly, slowly) is her fit motto, an expression which is in constant use. However, the country does advance though very slowly, and I did find some small differences in ten and a half years. There is, for example, the underground railway from Galata to Pera, and tramways now run in every direction which enable the people to get about as

\* i.e. at the time of writing this diary. This bridge is now, in its turn, to be replaced by a new one.—B. S.





*Photo by B S.* MOSAIC MOSQUE, CONSTANTINOPLE





they could not do before, except by walking or riding. I visited the bazaars of Stamboul, but they did not impress me at all, being inferior to the bazaars at Bagdad or Teheran. I got back to my club very wet, very tired, and very dirty. Stamboul is not a place to be explored when covered with deep snow, and with a temperature more worthy of St Petersburg than a southern capital. A city such as Constantinople should only be visited when the sun is shining, and the thermometer stands at about 80° in the shade.

The 16th of March I went to the Mosque of St Sofia. It is a noble building, especially inside, but the exterior is not very striking. I went up to the gallery and admired it more than any church I have ever seen. It reminded me somewhat of St Mark's at Venice, but it is a larger and nobler pile. It made my heart ache to think that it should have now ceased to be a church, and has become a Mohammedan mosque. However, the Byzantine Church had so debased Christianity that it is not wonderful that power departed from the Christian rulers of Constantinople. The Mohammedan priest who showed me over the mosque, pointed out to me two or three crosses still remaining high up in the gallery, though most ornaments have been carefully effaced. I look upon St Sofia as one of the sights I have been to see which repays one most thoroughly. I also visited the Mosque of Sultan Ahmed.

On the 17th I visited the Sultan's Palace at Dolmah Baghche, beautifully situated on the shore of the Bosphorus. On this occasion I was not admitted into the Palace, but I subsequently did visit it with

an Ambassador and was taken all over it. The present Sultan (*i.e.* Abdul Hamid II) has never lived in it.

On the 19th March I accompanied Colonel Studdy to the gate of the Palace at Yildiz Kiosk, and waited to see the Sultan go to worship at the mosque near the gate. We got into position about noon, and waited in the guard-room with a number of Pashas and other Turkish officers. Each side of the road was lined by two ranks of infantry. I was very much struck by the appearance of these men of the Turkish Imperial Guards, who were, in my opinion, the finest soldiers I had ever seen, though I had seen the Russian Imperial Guards at St Petersburg, and the German Imperial Guards at Berlin. What struck me about these men was their age, none young and none old, as they all seemed to be in the very prime of life from about twenty-five to about thirty-two. They were quite the hardiest-looking infantry I have ever seen in my life; their clothes were made of coarse cloth, and everything about them was thoroughly serviceable. If such soldiers were only well led, they might go anywhere and do anything.

The Sultan did not appear till nearly one o'clock, when at last the gate of the park was thrown open, and he rode out. First came two closed carriages, each containing two ladies of the harem, accompanied by African eunuchs, then came a large body of superior officers, Pashas, and Beys, arranged according to rank. Amongst these was Admiral Hobart Pasha, whom I knew. In front of the officers were two priests with censers containing incense.

The Sultan alone rode. He was in European dress but wearing a fez ; his horse, a very handsome large Arab, snow-white in colour, and almost covered with a golden saddle-cloth. The Sultan was a good-looking man, very fair, but with dark hair ; I should call him an Armenian in appearance, which is not curious, as he has more Georgian blood in his veins than any other race. It was a most bitterly cold day with snow on the ground, and I am told the Sultan greatly dislikes cold. As he passed down the ranks close to me I had a very good look at him ; he seemed ill and careworn. He dismounted at the door of the mosque and went in to worship. He remained in the mosque more than an hour, and then the procession re-formed, and he again passed through the double line of soldiers and in at the gate of Yildiz Kiosk. Yildiz in Turkish means "star."

On the 22nd of March I sent for my baggage which had at last arrived from Port Said on board the Messagerie steamer bound for Trebizond, but found, on trying to get up, I was quite unable to stand. I thereupon also sent for a doctor. The doctor who came was Dr Paterson, a pleasant and evidently clever man. He told me I had bronchitis, and must stay in bed and not think of moving for several weeks. I remained in bed, more or less, feeling very unwell until Saturday the 27th, when I was able to get out a little. It was fortunate, however, that I was detained here instead of at some small place between Trebizond and Erzroum, where I should have found no doctor and very little comfort.

On the 29th of March I went by steamer, starting

from the bridge over the Golden Horn to Haiwan Serai, a suburb of Constantinople near the Ayub Mosque where the Sultan goes to have his sword girded on by a Moulvi from Koonia (or Brûsa), the old Turkish capital. The sword used is that of Osman himself, the founder of their dynasty, and the Sultan is not considered to fully attain power until after this ceremony has been gone through. The Mosque of Ayub (Job) is outwardly an unpretentious building.

What strikes one most in Constantinople, and I may say all over the East, is that no one ever repairs anything. It must be heart-rending to whoever builds anything in the East to know that even his son will never think of keeping it in repair, even though it is the house built by his father and in which the son resides. He will not repair it, but if necessary prefers to build another house instead.

Things in Turkey seem to be going from bad to worse. Formerly bribes were taken by those high in office but not by the Sultan himself; now it is openly said that the Sultan himself can be bribed. One of my fellow passengers on the Austrian Lloyd steamer from Trieste had, so I heard, just paid a bribe of £20,000, of which £12,000 was said to have gone to the Sultan himself or his immediate *entourage* at Yildiz Kiosk, and there seemed to be some doubt as to whether, after all, he would obtain his concession. This is worse than in Russia, for though nearly everyone in Russia is said to be bribed, no one suggests that the Emperor himself is bribed. The Turkish character is, I fear, decidedly not improving. Hereto-

fore the Turk has been straightforward and honest according to his lights, but now that they are adopting the chicanery of the Greeks, they have a strong feeling against every improvement, and especially against everything western. They feel they are being shouldered out of the land by the Christians, and maintain a dogged attitude against all change and improvement, which has not always been the case in so marked a degree. I could see a great change during the ten years since I was last in Constantinople. The town-dwelling Turk has not improved, though the country Turk is still the hard-working, honest creature he always was, ready to toil for little pay, and happy with that little if only let alone. What would such a people become under an honest and capable government?

5th April. I saw Dr Paterson this morning who said I was much better, and as he permitted me to leave Constantinople for Trebizond, I embarked on board the Messagerie steamer "Arethusa." I had much trouble at the custom house with my baggage, which was all carefully searched again, thereby delaying me so that I was nearly left behind and only just got on board in time. We left Galata about 6 P.M., and steamed down the Golden Horn to the Bosphorus. I stayed on deck as long as I dared, but was driven below by the cold wind, as I feared a return of bronchitis. Certainly the voyage down the Bosphorus is one of the most beautiful sights in the world.

6th April. We had a comparatively fine day, and I managed to go on deck. We were skirting along a coast lined with low hills capped with snow,

looking very cold and dark. It is very curious that there is persistent snow so far to the south, though it is now nearly the middle of April.

7th April. We arrived this morning at the Port of Samsoon on the southern shore of the Black Sea. We landed some goods, but I did not go on shore as the steamer made only a short stay. We also put in during the night at Kharasson and discharged some cargo, but were soon off again.

On the 8th April we arrived at the port of Trebizond. I know few finer views than the first sight of Trebizond. In the distance is the snow-covered mountain of Lazistan, and nearer are low hills with patches of snow on them, while in the foreground we have the pleasant-looking town, the white-washed walls of the houses making a vivid contrast with the red-tiled roofs and the deep blue of the sea. This portion of Turkey is known as Anatolia. Tobacco, nuts and apples, and some other fruits are largely grown about here. Maize is brought from the Caucasian provinces of Russia by small sailing vessels, and wheat from inland near Erzurum, but there being no railroads wheat can hardly bear the cost of carriage on camels or mules. This is the town where Xenophon embarked with his Greeks after the famous retreat of the 10,000 from Persia, where they had accompanied Cyrus the Younger, and being defeated by the then king of Persia, were forced to retire. A great part of the old wall remains, and part of a ruined palace. Trebizond once belonged to the Genoese, and was taken by the Turks in 1461. I was very much amused at a young Greek, a British



subject, who, I believe, had been born in London. He had been trying a pony, and found the pony would not go. I said to him, "You should try a sharp pair of spurs." He said, "Oh no! the pony would not understand spurs." The idea tickled me a good deal, and I think if I had had a sharp pair of spurs, I would soon have taught that pony what spurs meant. I have tried spurs on ponies in many a land, and always found they understood them thoroughly when heartily applied.

I wanted to start on the 14th of April, if possible, but was told there was much snow on the road, and also some difficulty in hiring horses.

14th April. I have made all my arrangements to start to-morrow, but I am afraid I shall not be able to do so as it has been snowing so much. A storm over the sea is raging, and inland heavy snow is falling, and I fear I shall have a bad time in crossing the high passes in Armenia, which are at about 9,000 feet. In this climate 9,000 feet is always cold, though in the Himalayas we do not consider that any great height.

15th April. The horses I had hired did not appear this morning, so I visited the Church of St Sofia, situated about one and a half miles from Trebizond. It is built somewhat on the pattern of St Sofia at Constantinople, but of course on a much smaller scale. There is a good deal of handsome carving still remaining. It has a separate campanile, formerly used as a bell-tower, but since the church has been turned into a mosque, the priest now stands there when he calls the faithful to prayer. The church was, on this occasion, full of gunpowder,

and was guarded by soldiers so as to prevent anyone entering, for fear of causing an explosion. This must rather interfere with its use as a place of worship, but I fancy it was not much used except for some grand ceremonial.

## CHAPTER II

### OVER THE ZIGANEH PASS

WHEN I got back to the hotel, I found the horses had arrived. Though it was too late (being now nearly three p.m.) to do the regular march of twenty miles, I decided to leave and try to reach Matterajie, a distance of fifteen miles, the same evening. The country, though grand and wild, showed every sign of having passed through a fearfully severe winter. The winters in this part of Anatolia are always severe, but this had been an exceptional year, the winter having lengthened out far into the spring. Many cattle had died, and the supply of chaff which is kept to feed the cattle during the winter months had utterly failed. In ordinary years the cattle only require to be fed until the middle of February; it was now the middle of April, and snow still falling almost daily, and there was no grass, while the crops the year before had been very poor and scanty. The road, though called a waggon road, was certainly at this season not passable for any wheeled vehicle, and difficult in a few places even for horses. Matterajie was evidently a halting place for many caravans as

I found there were at least a dozen or more houses devoted to taking in travellers. I will describe the one at which I stopped, as it is typical of most of the others.

It was built of rough stones, and roofed with shingles which somewhat resemble slates. On entering the house there were two rooms, one used as a shop and having a front capable of being thrown open, but on this occasion, on account of the cold, it was closed with wooden shutters. The owner sold cheese, apples, walnuts, and bread, also in this instance, being a Persian, tea. The difference between a Persian and a Turk is, that a Turk always drinks coffee and a Persian tea. Each side of the room not used as a shop, had a long wooden bench or bedstead raised about eighteen inches from the ground, each bedstead capable of containing lengthways the bedding of five or six men. On the bedstead there were rows of thick mats, one for each person, and on these mats the travellers place their own bedding and any article they may possess. The shop will supply all they require to eat, both for themselves and their horses. One of the benches was cleaned out for me, a portion of it being swept and the mats shaken out, and my bedding, which was just some blankets contained in a Wolseley valise to keep them dry, was spread out, and I was very comfortable. There was a brazier of charcoal at the foot of the bed, and a copper tea-kettle of a rather primitive pattern on the fire. It was more like a jug with a lid to it than a kettle, and the whole of its interior was tinned. This was ready on the fire with hot water in it in case any traveller

wanted tea. There happened to be no other travellers in this khan or inn this evening, but myself and my servant, for which I was not sorry. In the event of the two lines of beadsteads being over-full, there was another row of bedsteads in the shop which could be occupied. My servant and the servant of the inn-keeper slept on the beds in the shop, while the keeper of the inn slept on the bench at the opposite side of my room. Not being able to speak any Turkish at this time, I was unable to communicate with my servant except by signs, so I was very glad to find the inn-keeper was a Persian—which language I spoke—and that there was somebody who could explain to my servant what I wanted. He, however, was very clever, and having long been in English service, readily understood my requirements. Outside the two rooms, and to the right there was an immense stable, very lofty, as it was intended to stable camels as well as horses. It was capable of holding 100 horses, but at the time I looked in there was only one camel and a few horses occupying it.

The Persian said his prayers and went to bed on the long bedstead opposite mine. I was awakened about five a.m. by his making tea, and my servant brought me some. My equipment for travelling was as follows :—

A pair of mule trunks of the Afghan pattern, made of thin pieces of wood, and covered over with thick bullock's hide, and sewn through and through the wood and leather. These are called in Peshawr, where they are made, "yakdans," though the Afghans generally call them "yarukdans." These

are far the best travelling trunks for carrying on mules, one yakdan being slung on each side of the mule, and a Wolseley valise containing my bedding placed between them. This makes a nice load for one horse. My servant rode another mule or horse, on which he had a pair of small saddle bags, containing a little food and a tinned cooking-pot, a few tin plates, knives, and forks. On my own horse I had a pair of small saddle bags, and a very small valise strapped behind me. My whole kit was thus in a very convenient form and as I was to be away at least a year, I think I managed with very little. Shortly after six a.m. we were off. This village of Matterajie was entirely devoted to travellers and their wants. There were three forges already at work, looking nice and warm with the bright glow of their fires. Our horses crunched the ice under foot as we rode along, but no snow was falling. I like Eastern ways and simple habits, it is a relief after the many wants of life in Europe to see how little one really requires to be fairly comfortable.

The road ascended steadily the whole way. About five miles from where we stopped last night, we passed Jevazlik, the place I had wanted to reach the first day out from Trebizond, but was unable to do so. The khans or inns were much the same as those at Matterajie; some of them, however, were a little superior, having an upper storey. At Jevazlik we crossed the river which we had followed ever since we had left Trebizond by a curious bridge of two arches of very unequal size and height, which caused a feeling of apparent insecurity. They are most uncomfortable for laden animals to traverse,

but I believe, though they look so insecure, they last quite as long as other bridges. Continuing up-hill, about half way between Jevazlik and Kamsu-Koi, we came upon snow, and from here onwards the hills on all the roads were covered with it. It was a lovely day, with a warm sun overhead, but snow everywhere, which was rather trying to the eyes owing to the sun's glare.

At last we sighted Kamsu-Koi, a village perched high up on the mountains, each house just a mass of snow, and looking like sugared cake, while a great vulturine eagle, or "lammergeyer," sailing overhead, added the finishing touch to such a scene. The river, now become quite small, made a great roar tumbling over a cliff; and huge mountains rose on either hand, the basaltic rock cropping out at many points to form castles worthy of the fabled genii of the East. If Kamsu-Koi were a village within reach of England many travellers would visit it for the weird beauty of its scenery. It far surpasses anything I have seen in the Tyrol, though the neighbourhood of Innsbruck is grand in winter when it has its snowy covering. Kamsu-Koi is called a Greek village, more, I fancy, because the people belong to the Greek Church than because they are Greek by race, as they appear to be of the same Armenian race as one meets in the other villages. As I travelled along the road, I was much struck by the number of churches I passed. Almost all the larger groups of houses have their church, often tiny, but still well marked as a church, and far better built than the houses, while in two or three places, though the villages were small, the churches were really fine

buildings. Even the small churches have an apse instead of our western form of chancel, which looks to a casual observer not unlike the "mihrab" of a mosque which is always built out in the direction of Mecca.

Certain Mahommedan tribes in Persia believe that Hussein, the grandson of Mahomet went voluntarily to death when he was killed near Bagdad, so that mankind should thereby be saved. This idea of an atonement being requisite is evidently acquired from Christianity. The existence of such a feeling, implanted in the human breast by God Himself, in preparation for the Atonement which it was necessary Our Saviour should make for us is, however, very widely spread.

When I reached Kamsu-Koi it was bitterly cold, and icicles a yard long were hanging from the roofs of the houses, and we were glad to shut up the house and cower over a pan of charcoal. The people here use enormous water jugs hollowed out of wood and holding four or five gallons each, and I saw a comparatively little girl toiling along with one of these jugs strapped to her back. Amongst the drove of sheep which I saw being driven to the plains, was a four-horned ram, and I believe they are not uncommon about here.

The apparent connection between very cold countries and many-horned sheep is curious. High up in the Himalayas, in Kashmir, four-horned sheep are common, also in the more mountainous parts of Afghanistan, and in Iceland four-horned and even six-horned sheep are found. I wonder what connection there can be between great cold and this



peculiarity of sheep to become many-horned. Here, also, I came upon a giant sheep-dog, such as is found in the high Himalayas, and which figures in English books as the Thibetan mastiff. They are very fine dogs, and one which I had in India was good-tempered and quiet, but they are apt, as they grow old, to become very savage. I had one in India which I gave to a Sergeant-Major at Murree. He sold it to a native Rajah who presented it to the Prince of Wales, who brought it to England. When I was staying at Sandringham, the Prince showed me a Thibetan mastiff which he had brought from India, the only survivor of seven, the others having died of old age. This dog was the same colour as mine, but I could not recognise it, as it was very old. The dogs in Armenia, though very like the Himalayan variety, are quieter than the Indian ones, as they will in daytime allow the approach of strangers without showing signs of anger.

17th April. I started this morning for a toilsome day's work, it being a steady ascent for eleven miles up to the crest of the Ziganeh Pass. There was more or less snow all the way, and I could only distinguish that I was on the road at all by seeing the telegraph posts sticking up through the snow on either side. There was a narrow space of snow at the very edge of the road which was trodden hard, and we rode along this. It was rather unpleasant at first riding along the snowy road with one foot hanging over a precipice, but we soon got accustomed to it. The glare from the snow to-day was very trying, many men on the road were wearing goggles to prevent snow-blindness. The sun was very hot, and

the reflection from the bright snow blistered my hands and face, though I have a pretty tough skin.

At last we got to the top of the pass; the peak, which rises only a very little above it, is marked 8,600 ft. on my map. We met several caravans coming from Erzroum, and had some difficulty in passing one another, as there was a path of only eighteen inches wide of beaten snow, and whoever left this would go plump down into deep snow; one party or the other had to do this. I was making way for a Turkish officer when I sank deep into the snow, and had to be extricated with some difficulty, as I was quite unable to extricate myself. Fortunately I was on foot at the time.

I was thankful to have a fine day for crossing the mountains as it must be no joke getting over in a snowstorm, and much of this snow was freshly fallen.

After crossing, we soon dropped down below the snow limit, and about eight miles after that, we reached the village of Ardasa, where we were to stop. The whole distance we travelled this day was said to be twenty-two miles, but it took us some nine hours, and the horses with loads took eleven hours. In the summer, no doubt, the distance is done quickly with post-horses, but it is very different at this season, especially as this winter had not only been a very severe one, but had lasted very late. My pass from the Pasha of Trebizond was asked for, and the Kaimakan, or Turkish civil authority, came to call upon me. He examined my revolver, which happened to be of a new pattern, but we could not converse much, as he knew little Persian.

18th April. To-day being Sunday, I halted, and

had a quiet day and wrote home. I have a nice room with a balcony looking on to the street, and windows with glass in them, and a fireplace that does not smoke. It is not very clean, but my servant has swept it out and dusted the mats, and I really have as much as a traveller can expect, and much more than I shall get further on. Sometimes I see a caravan the leading pony of which is very gaily got up, with plenty of brass bells round his neck, and two large bells of iron about sixteen inches long on his sides. He also wears bunches of coloured worsted about as big as a baby's head, with a number of other pieces of worsted streaming out from them. These ornaments were raised on poles over his load, and looked somewhat like flags.

19th April. I was off soon after five o'clock this morning, and had a pleasant ride for about eight hours to Murad Khan. The distance is thirty miles. The road for the whole way followed the course of a river which has cut a narrow valley through a vast range of the most barren mountains I ever saw. Hardly anything grows on these mountains, a small shrub even being rare. In a few places on the higher ones there are pine-trees. In the little valley scooped out by the river there were a few orchards with water which was led by a channel to the root of each tree. In spite, however, of these few orchards, the country was very barren; where there were trees, birds were numerous, especially the common Indian crow, but the grey portion of their plumage was paler in colour than I had seen them in India, and magpies were very plentiful. I must have seen at least fifty in the day's ride. I saw a

pretty little woodpecker at work on a tree, and sparrows and chaffinches were very numerous. There were also a few sand-pipers in the river bed. Though I carried a gun, I never saw any game to fire at since I left Trebizond. The road was good to-day, and I passed through a flourishing little town called Gumesh Khanah, "Gumesh" being Turkish for silver. The houses were well-built, and had orchards round them. This place had silver and lead mines, which accounted in some measure for its prosperity, but they were not being worked. The Turkish Government will only permit them to be worked on such terms as no lessee will undertake; namely, that all expenses of working should be paid by the lessee who may keep the whole of the lead for his share, but must give the whole of the silver to the Government. As wood is very scarce in these mountains, the expense of smelting is very great, though I believe in former times, when the silver-lead ore was worked by the Government, the villagers were forced to supply a certain amount of charcoal for the purpose. I merely rode through the town of Gumesh Khanah, and proceeded to the regular halting place, Murad Khan, which is not even a village, but only a superior double-storied house with two sets of rooms for travellers, kept by an Armenian, who had a walled-in orchard of which evidently great care was taken; some three or four shops and some stables. The owner of the khan, or inn, at which I put up also had a bakery. Great loaves of very dark-coloured leaven bread were being drawn from the oven as I rode up. They were very uninviting looking, and were made partly of wheaten,

and partly of maize flour. I ate a piece of the bread, and, as I was hungry, found it palatable, though it was not nice-looking. I looked in at the shop-windows, which contained many things I should not have expected. Kerosine oil from America astonished me, when I thought of the inexhaustible supply at Baku. I strolled over to the blacksmith's shop and watched him shoe a donkey; the shoes used are not the least like English horseshoes, being oval pieces of iron with a small hole in the middle, and held on by five or six nails. They quite encircle the foot. I have heard that Europeans who have tried both sorts of shoes, English and Turkish, prefer the latter for this stony country.\* The nails also each have a large head sticking up above the level of the shoe, in order to give foothold on the rock. The blacksmith's shop contained all that was likely to be wanted in the way of iron goods by the simple peasants. There were plenty of horseshoes of every size, some so large that I cannot think any horses of this country could wear them, also several ploughshares, pickaxes, hoes, and digging forks, and a very handy sort of hatchet. I saw the transaction of paying for the one shoe which had been put on a donkey; the sum to be paid appeared to be one piastre or twopence. But change is a great difficulty in this land, and the peasant had to turn out his purse and talk a good deal over the matter before it could be arranged. It is most difficult to procure change even in Trebizond, and I had to pay fourpence to

\* This primitive form of shoe is almost universal in Asia Minor and in similar rock-strewn countries, the English pattern being quite unsuitable. [B.S.]

get change in small coins for four shillings. The larger silver pieces are plentiful, and so is the debased silver currency which has lately been reduced by Government order to half its nominal value, but small sterling-silver pieces are almost unprocurable.

20th April. Started at 5.15 a.m. for Baibort, a thirty-two mile march. I crossed the Wa'ook Dagh pass at a height of 6,100 feet. There was a good deal of snow, however, but much less than I had found on the Ziganeh pass as it is much lower, and the hot sun of the last few days had made considerable difference in the amount of snow. There was a fair road the whole way. I arrived at Baibort about 4 p.m., having given my horses an hour's rest and a feed on the road. As I rode into the town I met the Pasha, a pleasant gentlemanly-looking Turk, riding out with an escort of four cavalry soldiers. He at once enquired who I was, and upon my servant telling him, he very cordially asked me to stay with him at the konak or government house. I declined his offer with thanks, but I found it very difficult to get a place to put up at. The khans or caravanserais were so very extra dirty that I could not stand them. A cavalry soldier was sent with me by the Pasha, and at last I discovered a clean little room next to a coffee-seller's. I immediately changed my boots and trousers, which were very muddy, and went to call upon the Pasha, Suleyman Pasha. We talked away through an interpreter, an Armenian schoolmaster, who spoke both French and English fairly well, having learnt them in Constantinople. I presented him with an "Illustrated London News," which he was able to read and very glad to

see. The Pasha was most civil and kind, and begged that if I would not stay with him, I would at least have supper with him, but I felt obliged to decline, as I thought it would keep me up very late, and I wanted to start very early in the morning. The Pasha was most intelligent, and took much interest in the general election which was then going on in England. He wanted to know if Mr Gladstone had got in. I was not able to inform him, as when I left Trebizond the result of the election was not known. My baggage was so late coming up this evening that I contented myself with heating a tin of soup and eating some bread for supper before going to bed.

The country from Murad Khan to Baibort is very barren and sparsely populated, especially after crossing the Wo'ook Dagh pass. Wild tulips and hyacinths, also some wild daffodils, were growing close to the melting snow. The white patches of snow here and there on the plain and all over the hills, relieved somewhat the utter barrenness of the country. Accustomed as I had been to the bare, barren hills of the Punjab frontier, yet I had seen nothing like these hills, except about Aden. Many sorts of birds were seen, amongst them the hoopoo with the beautiful crest of feathers on its head. There is a pretty legend in Germany about the hoopoo. It is said that when our Saviour was on the cross, the hoopoes flew to Him, and endeavoured to draw out the nails fastening Him to the cross. The bird got its feathers dabbled with blood in its efforts to release the Saviour. Its feathers are blotched with a reddish hue and as a reward for

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its attempted service, a crown of feathers grew on its head, which all hoopoes have since worn. I also saw jackdaws to-day for the first time, and rooks were plentiful. The kestrel was common, and I noticed one specimen of the great black vulturine eagle, an enormous bird, called 'kala basha' in India.



## CHAPTER III

### ERZROUM

21ST APRIL. We were late in starting to-day and I did not get away till a quarter past seven in the morning. But the delights of a town and a thirty-two-miles' march yesterday (the whole of which they walked) had its effect on the two men who accompanied the horses, and I could not get them to start sooner. The march to-day was called only fifteen miles but I think it was nearer nineteen. It was a very good road the whole way, and snow only in patches. I found very fair quarters to-day, the only objection being that the house being quite new was damp, but the newness ensured its being pretty clean. A bitterly cold wind was blowing off the snow-covered mountains, and I was glad to take shelter ~~inside.~~

22nd April. We crossed the Kop Dagħ pass to-day, which is the highest point on the road between Trebizond and Erzroum, and is between 7,000 and 8,000 feet high. The snow of course, lay very thick, but there was a pretty good road beaten through it. I crossed the pass about noon, and never felt the sun so burning hot, even in India.

My face and hands were just like raw beef, and the combination of icy wind blowing off this snow and burning sun overhead was very trying.

Ashkaleh is the name of the village where I stopped; the khan or inn was of quite a different pattern from any at which I had as yet put up. It was a regular Armenian house, such as I will describe later on. The Kop Dagħ is the watershed between the rivers that run into the Black Sea and those falling into the Persian Gulf. The rivers I left this morning on the other side of the dividing line, find their way into the Black Sea, while the streams pouring down on this side, eventually flow into the Euphrates, and so reach the Persian Gulf.

To-day I saw two chukars, a bird very similar to the red-legged partridge of Europe; they were the first game birds I had seen since leaving England.

23rd April. I started at a quarter to 5 a.m. as I had a long ride of thirty-five miles into Erzroum. The road passed through a very barren, desolate country, and there was considerably more snow on the road over the plain than there had been heretofore. This plain lies so high that the snow lasts till very late in the spring. I saw some common wild ducks and also some ruddy sheldrakes, at which I had a long but unsuccessful shot. This part of the country is very sparsely inhabited until Ilidja is reached, where there are some hot springs, which are much used for bathing by persons with skin disease. There was a fine house at Ilidja belonging to a rich Armenian gentleman, whose acquaintance I afterwards made in Erzroum. He was of an old Armenian family, and had made a large fortune, so

he had much influence among the Christians of this country. He was called Pastermajee, from the name of his trade. Pasterma is an abominable preparation of dried meat, something like the biltong in which the Boers delight.

Ilidja is a flourishing place, superior to most Armenian villages, with beautiful orchards, and is a great resort in summer for the rank and fashion of Erzroom. Soon after leaving Ilidja I caught sight of Erzroom, but the view was not very imposing as seen from this direction. On the left of the road ran the Kara Su or western branch of the Euphrates. At this time, as a result of the melting snow, it was almost a lake, and on it were many wild geese, wild duck, cranes, and other water birds. The name Kara Su means black water.

I reached Erzroom about 4 p.m. and went to a very good khan or inn, and after leaving my baggage there, I called on the British Consul, Captain Everett, who most kindly asked me to put up at his house, and had my belongings brought over from the inn. The streets of Erzroom were in a dreadful state from the melting snow which had accumulated during the past five months of winter. The utter want of verdure gives Erzroom a very desolate appearance. There are, however, some fine houses, chiefly belonging to Christians, which retrieve it to some extent. The old Citadel, now in a ruinous condition, is a very remarkable-looking building and has a curious brick-tower with an inscription round it, which, however, I could not decipher. There was also a building, then used as a barrack and storehouse, which had the remains of a fine tower or minaret, built of red and

blue glazed bricks alternating with one another. This is similar to many minarets I have seen in Persia, and are in quite a different style of architecture to anything to be found in Turkey.

There was a handsome ancient church in Erzroum, which had been converted into a mosque, but as the roof had fallen in, the main building was not then in use, but a small chapel, the roof of which was intact, was used instead.

I stayed at Erzroum from the 23rd April to the 3rd May. There was famine in the town, and Captain Everett, the British Consul, and the American Missionaries were trying to alleviate the distress, but the sum they had received up to that date from England (£300) was quite inadequate for the purpose. In the *Levant Herald* it was stated, on the authority of a telegram from Moosul, that dead bodies were being eaten by the famished people in that town. I knew Moosul and Diarbeker well and felt very much for the inhabitants of those places, but I cannot help thinking there was some exaggeration in the *Levant Herald* account. The Turkish authorities at Erzroum had some wheat which they were selling to the baker, so bread could be bought, though at a high rate. The people were greatly impoverished in consequence of the war. Both Russian and Turkish armies swept over the whole land, and every grain of corn that was not concealed, was taken away. The Russians paid for what they took, but the Turks did not, only giving receipts payable by the Turkish government. But where these receipts were given to Christians they were never paid. On the contrary, so far from the

Turkish troops paying a Christian for anything, the poor villagers had been forced to pay up all arrears of taxes, even for the period during the war when they abandoned their villages and fled into Russia to escape the ravages of the Kurds, who were employed as irregular troops by the Turkish Government, as Kurd Ismail Pasha, the Governor-General of Erzroum, being himself a Kurd, either could not or would not keep them in check. The crops almost entirely failed the previous year, and yet, while holding receipts from the Turkish Government for provisions supplied to the Turkish armies, the villagers were called upon to pay heavy arrears of taxes, but could get none of the money owing to them. This, coupled with the utter want of food, was driving the population of Armenia to desperation. The Mahommedan population suffered almost as much as the Christians, but not to quite the same extent as they had been paid a portion of the money due to them for provisions supplied to the army; also being Mahommedans they were not plundered by the Kurds. The Turkish Government was so pressed for money at Constantinople that the Pashas of every outlying province were constantly being told to send more money to Constantinople, and they were, in consequence, obliged to collect, justly or unjustly, every penny they could screw out of the population. I believe the Turks wish to do what is right and fair, but they are so hampered in every direction that they are almost compelled to oppress all, Turk and Christian, in order to get the necessary funds. It is but human nature that when the screw has to be very tightly applied, those of the opposite religion receive more

severe treatment than those belonging to the ruling race. Still the positions of the Turks and Christians throughout Anatolia is deplorable. Bands of Kurds still roam over the country, levying blackmail on the Christian villages, while the Turkish troops are in too small numbers to put down these marauders.\*

Erzroum was formerly a place of great trade and large numbers of caravans passed through it, going and coming between Persia and Trebizond, on the Black Sea, but this traffic has now practically ceased. The famine was so bad that neither food for man or beast was procurable, and the road near the Persian frontier was so infested by Kurdish marauders that caravans could not get through. Persian Kurds plunder within the Turkish border, and Turkish Kurds raid within the Persian border. The Persian trade with England is thus being thrown into the hands of Russia, as it is impossible to import British goods *viâ* Trebizond. All trade is now carried from Poti *viâ* Tiflis to Tabriz, and as Russia levies a prohibitive import duty on English goods brought by this route, Russian goods of very inferior quality are brought instead, which, besides other advantages, have a good waggon road the whole way up to the Persian frontier, while English goods have to face the terrible roads through Turkey on which I had been travelling. England should insist on a good and determined Pasha being appointed to Erzroum, and as the population of the country here is so largely Christian, the Pasha should be of the same religion.

\* These remarks apply to the state of matters prevailing at the time of my journey in 1880, but there has probably been but little improvement since then. [C. E. S.]

Men like Rustam Pasha, who formerly ruled in the Lebanon, should be sent. I hear Rustam Pasha was once offered the Pashalic of Erzroum, but he was obliged to decline it as he suffered from weak lungs, and the climate of Erzroum is very trying to a man with such a complaint. No doubt the Sultan, if he wished, could find a Christian Pasha for Erzroum, if England and Germany insisted on it.

The height of Erzroum, which I took myself, as also did Colonel Everett, is 6,249 feet above sea level, and though to-day is the 1st of May, the mountains are still covered with snow.

Colonel Everett informed me that for a considerable period in the winter the temperature was at, or below, zero Fahrenheit, and that on one day they had 47° of frost. I had the greatest difficulty in hiring horses to go to Tabriz in Persia. The usual hire for three horses from Erzroum to Tabriz is £10 Turkish, but I had to pay £30 for three horses, and even at that price the muleteer was hardly willing to go, saying he would have to carry all the grain required for the journey with him from Erzroum. Almost all Turks have a nickname, as well as their own name, as the number of Mahommedan names is really very small. The governor here, a very bigoted Mahommedan, was known as "Phosphor" Mustapha Pasha. He himself explained to me "On m'appelle 'Phosphor' parceque je suis si vif."

The fortifications of Erzroum are very strong. There are several detached forts besides the actual fortifications of the town, four situated in the hills and one in the plain. But the Turks do not care very much for Erzroum, as they consider it too near the Russian

frontier to think seriously of defending it. Their principal place of arms for the defence of their frontier in this direction is Erzinghan. Though the Russians besieged Erzroum in the last war, from November 1877 to February 1878, they never took it. They got possession in February 1878 under the armistice between Russia and Turkey, but had to restore it to the Turks after the Berlin conference. I heard the Russians lost 20,000 men, chiefly from typhus fever, during this siege, and the population of the town also suffered dreadfully from this disease. Mr Cole, the American Missionary, who remained in the town during the siege, gave me a terrible account of the sickness, and said that both besieged and besiegers suffered frightfully. In fact, though two years had elapsed since the town was besieged, it had by no means even yet recovered from the effects. And now famine follows war, as it so often does. I do feel deeply for the people of Armenia, whether Turk or Christian. They are a patient, civil, and hard-working people, but the wave of war periodically sweeps over the country. Three times in less than fifty years have Russian armies invaded this unhappy land, and the people, whether Mahomedan or Christian, suffer both from the Russian and Turkish army.

After leaving Erzroum, where I had been so hospitably entertained for nearly a fortnight by Colonel and Mrs Everett, I took the road to Bayazid which begins to ascend almost at once towards the Deir Boyun, a strongly entrenched position a few miles from Erzroum. The Turks prepared this place for defence months before the Russians came near it.



After the fall of Kars in 1877, the Russians advanced, and attacked Hamid Moukhtar Pasha in this position. The Turks had repulsed the Russians, and had practically won the battle, when the Russian general, by a ruse, enticed the Turks to follow them. The Turks were in their turn repulsed, and the Russians entered the entrenchments with them. A disastrous rout of the Turkish army followed. Had the Russians followed the Turks that night, they might have captured the town of Erzroum. However they did not follow at once, and missed the opportunity.

I viewed the entrenchments of the Turks; the position was a strong one for the defence, and I give the Russians every credit for their victory.

I reached Hussein Kaleh, a distance of about nineteen miles, at half past seven in the evening. The roads were very bad, and I had to cross some twenty streams swollen by the melting snow all falling into a small river named the Passin, which is an affluent of the Araxes. I crossed the Passin close to Hussein Kaleh. It was deep, and as I was mounted on a rather small (though very good) pony, I had to keep my legs raised up high to prevent them getting into the water. This pony had been purchased for £11 Turkish just before we left Erzroum. Erzroum means 'the land of Roum,' Roum here applies not to the Romans of Rome but to the Greeks of Constantinople. At Hussein Kaleh there are the ruins of a very fine Genoese (?) castle, which looks most imposing with its triple line of walls.

The rivers in this part of the world seem to run in the most curious way. Yesterday at Erzroum I

left the Kara Su or Western branch of the Euphrates ; here at Hussein Kaleh is a small river called the Passin which flows into the Araxes. One would hardly expect to find, within twenty miles, one river falling into the Persian Gulf and another into the Caspian Sea. I believe it is possible to stand on a mountain near Hussein Kaleh and see three rivers, one of which falls into the Black Sea, the second into the Caspian Sea, and the third into the Persian Gulf.

4th May. I left Hussein Kaleh early, and rode sixteen miles to Amrakom, a Turkish village. The road passed through a more fertile-looking country than any I had seen for some time, but unfortunately no crops were being sown, the people having no seed, and were deserting the villages to crowd into Erzurum. About twelve miles on the road, the Passin river joins the main stream of the Araxes, where there is a stone bridge, and one enters on the Alashgird plain, a sorely famine-stricken country, where people were dying of starvation.

At Amrakom, where I made my regular enquiries about the famine, I took the names of ten people who had died of starvation within the last month. The last death had taken place five days previous to my arrival. In the villages numbers of people could be seen picking dandelions and grass to cook for food, so as to eke out the very small amount of bread they had. As the snow was only just melting there was very little grass even to be found for food. I was much touched by one tiny little tot of a girl whom I met with her father carrying home some green stuff to cook for food. I put a little money

in her hand, so that she might purchase something better. It is chiefly children who die from hunger. I was given the numbers who had died of starvation within the last month, as two men, two women, and six children.

Of course, when the summer comes on things are a trifle better, as grass and dandelions when cooked do eke out a scanty supply of bread. During the winter, the whole country being buried many feet deep in snow, nothing could be gathered in the fields. The people had to trust in a great measure to dried herbs gathered the previous autumn, and to the roots of gum tragacanth, which they eat, though I do not think it can be at all pleasant.

From Amrakom, on the 5th May, I went three and a half miles to Deli Baba, passing the Turkish entrenchments where a battle had been fought the previous year. The village takes its name from a Mahommedan saint, who is buried here ; the tomb, partly built of a sort of purple marble, is in good repair. I could not at all discover its age, and the people could only tell me that it was "very old," which they would equally say whether its age was 100 or 2,000 years.

I saw a large number of the female population out in the fields gathering herbs, grass, and crocus bulbs for food. I put up with the head man of the village, an Armenian, in an underground house. To build such a house, a hole about seven feet deep is dug in the ground, and walls to the height of three or four feet above ground are formed of great logs of trees ; other great beams are then laid across as supports for the roof, brushwood is placed upon

these, and finally earth is heaped on the top. The mud in the middle is raised somewhat into the form of a cone, so that the rain may more readily drain off the roof. Such houses have a most dreary appearance, looking just like mud heaps. When you enter, you find that every room is a stable, the climate for many months being so severe that people are glad to have their cattle herded in the dwelling houses for the sake of the additional warmth they afford. Many of these buildings are very large, capable of holding one hundred animals. At one end of each apartment there is a raised platform with a bed-place and a fireplace occupied by the family themselves, but the breath of the cattle renders the air so warm that, except in very severe weather, no fire can be required; in fact, I believe the fire is only used for cooking purposes. There is no drainage, and even at this season, when the houses are comparatively clean, the atmosphere is very sickly and unpleasant. There are a few holes in the roof through which a small amount of air and light are admitted. When a guest enters one of these dwellings for the first time his host takes him by the hand and leads him through a very dark passage into the room (or stable!). At Deli Baba, my host, being a very well-to-do Armenian, had several of these large stables, and was able to give me a clean empty one, which had not been used for a long time, and he very kindly, without any suggestion from me, had the raised platform well washed with several buckets of water before I took possession. In spite of the scarcity of food, we were asked, servants and all, to come and eat

bread, and I had actually seen the head-man's wife preparing grass for cooking, but as I had brought plenty of food from Erzroum, I did not accept this kind offer.

One curious feature of these underground houses is that many of them have wells under them, from which the water is raised in a bucket attached to a long pole, hung on an upright post which rises above the house. This arrangement for drawing water is common enough in Asia, but it looks curious protruding from the roof of a house.

I visited the Armenian Church at Deli Baba. Considering the poverty of the inhabitants, it was a very good building, and more money proportionately must have been spent upon it than upon many a church in western lands. I also went to the cemetery, where there were several Russian graves marked by wooden crosses; one was evidently the grave of an officer, and had a double cross, and his name cut on it, with the date, April 1878.

May 6th, Thursday. Rode from Deli Baba back again (almost on our road of yesterday) for about a mile, then turned to the left and found that a mountain torrent, forcing its way to join the Araxes, had broken a passage through a range of rocky hills forming a magnificent gorge. A little to the right of the gorge we came upon the edge of a position where a battle had been fought two years previously. The stream pouring through the gorge formed the road, and had to be crossed three times. This was rather unpleasant as it was much swollen by the melting snow. Some miles after leaving the Deli Baba pass, we turned to the right and ascended

a mountain of no great height. We soon came to snow, and then descended to the Kurdish village of Fahir, or Dahir. Just before we reached the village it began to rain, so we stayed here an hour to feed the horses and to take shelter. The house we stayed in was, as usual, underground, but of a very inferior description. The Kurds, being a more savage and uncultivated people, have rougher houses than the Armenians. There being a famine here, we could get no food for our horses (we carried food for ourselves), so went on. After leaving Fakir the road became very bad so that we lost it, and came upon a great deal of snow into which our horses sank very deep, so we had much difficulty in crossing it. When we got back to the road, there was much snow for several miles, and as it had been half-melted by the sun, our horses sank through the upper crust which had been formed by travellers during the winter, and we had altogether a most trying journey; while to add to our troubles a snow-storm came on.

At last we descended into the Alashgird plain, and got away from the snow. We kept on for some miles until we reached the Armenian village of Zedikhan. I was glad to get in, as we had done some thirty miles over a very bad road, and wading through snow and doing a long march on tired horses is very tiring, even to the riders. The mixed snow and ice which falls here is very cutting and trying to the face, and cold winds alternating with a hot sun make the skin of one's face sore.

At Zedikhan the famine was severe. We could get no food for our horses except a little straw. Fortunately for the poor beasts, we had brought some

barley with us for them, but we had to be very sparing of it, for we had only a limited quantity and we did not know when we should be able to get any more, perhaps not until we reached Persia. I had to give some of our precious barley to the horses of the two cavalry soldiers who had accompanied me.

Every day I had had an escort of one mounted policeman, but to-day I had two regular cavalry soldiers of the Turkish army, one of whom was an Arab. I saw he was not a Turk by his face, so I asked where he came from, and he said, "Moosul, on the Tigris." I had been there (see Chap. IX Part I), and could say a few words in praise of his city, within two miles of which are the ruins of Nineveh, and where one is also shown the tombs of Seth and of Jonah. I fear the tomb of Seth is decidedly doubtful, and I do not feel quite certain about that of Jonah, but I daresay that they are quite as authentic as half the places one goes to see, and if the visitor can only believe it, it is sufficient; but, in any case, Nineveh is not doubtful. These troopers were armed with Winchester repeating rifles, so as far as armament went they were ahead of our army. At Zedikhan they told us there had been ten deaths from starvation in the village within one month.

## CHAPTER IV

### I CROSS THE PERSIAN FRONTIER

7TH MAY. I left Zedikhan early, and rode over the fertile-looking Alashgird plain, but found hardly any crops sown, as the people had no seed. If something is not done immediately by the Government, a worse famine than the present one is impending, and another winter without food will sweep the country of a large portion of its population.

We passed through a large village named Molla Suleyman, where there was a party of Turkish regular cavalry stationed, and where my escort was relieved by two fresh cavalry soldiers. I had a letter from the Armenian Catholic Bishop at Erzroum to deliver to his vicar at Molla Suleyman, so I saw the priest and also had a cup of coffee with the captain commanding the Turkish cavalry. I found I could not travel by the regular road over the plain to Kara Kalissa as it was very swampy and a storm was just coming on, so had to go a roundabout way which added considerably to the length of my journey to-day.

I now traversed a severely-flooded country, through which the horses could hardly plough their way, to



Alashgird. It came on to rain heavily, and I took shelter in the house of a very gentlemanly Turk. It was a rich village, and his underground house was better than usual. He was most kind and hospitable, bringing me fried eggs, sour milk, and bread. He said nobody had died of hunger in his village, but people were deserting it, and fleeing to Russian territory where there was food. He said the prospect was bad, as they had sown hardly any grain.

When I left he sent five or six men to show me the road, as the whole country was deeply under water, and we had to cross six or seven large streams in flood. I heard a curious thing some months later, that, though hardly any seed had been sown in this neighbourhood, a fair crop was eventually produced, as the seed sown the year before, and which had quite failed owing to drought, germinated this year when there was plenty of rain.

At last we got to Kara Kalissa after a very tiring day, though I do not suppose the actual distance travelled was more than twenty-two miles. I had a letter of introduction to the kaimakan of Kara Kalissa, and sent one of my escort on with it. The kaimakan sent a man to meet me and came half the way himself. He gave me a very hospitable welcome, and as he spoke some Persian, I was able to converse with him without an interpreter. At the kaimakan's house I met a cazi, or Mahommedan judge. The only Mahommedan law book is the Koran, and every cazi is also a priest. This one had shared with Ghazi Osman Pasha in the splendid defence of Plevna, where he had been taken prisoner with

Ghazi Osman Pasha's army, and had been sent both to Moscow and St Petersburg. He had learnt to speak Russian, and for a Mahommedan priest was a most intelligent man. No doubt his trip to Russia had enlightened his mind, and he also spoke some Persian. This night I had a comfortable sleep at the kaimakan's as there were no cows in my room, and above all no fleas. The night before, at Zedikhan, I had been devoured by fleas (though I do not mind a few), and had been kept in a perfect fever by them. Cows and buffaloes in one's bedroom I cannot bear, as they are very restless, and in their company there is a most horrid smell; I therefore highly appreciated the kaimakan's civilised house.

May 8th. I started early, my escort of two cavalry soldiers accompanying me. One of these men had light flaxen hair and blue eyes, and a rather turned-up nose. I asked him where he came from. He said Diarbekir, which astonished me, as I knew the population of Diarbekir was largely Kurdish and had very dark complexions. He said however, that he was a Circassian brought up at Diarbekir, and that he was of Schamyle's own tribe, and had emigrated from Circassia and settled in Turkey. He was a very smart young fellow, and much in style like a Russian cavalry soldier, and I could not help thinking he was a Russian deserter, as he had a Slavonic face, and looked far more like a Pole than a Circassian. The latter are generally very handsome men, while he, though smart-looking enough, had an ugly face. Also in his manner to me he was so different from any Turkish soldier I had ever seen. My escort usually would not do

the smallest thing for me beyond escorting me, while this young fellow was always on the watch to bring me a light for my cigarette, or to hold my horse when I dismounted.

We crossed a number of streams close to the town of Kara Kalissa, some of them very deep, and I got decidedly wet in doing so. After a time we entered the bed of the Euphrates, which is at this point from half to one and a quarter miles wide. It must have been formed when the river was in a very different state from what it is now, as, though at this season when the melting snow renders the river larger than usual, it occupies only a comparatively small portion of the old bed. The bed that I saw would be that of a very large river indeed. The drying-up of the Euphrates is prophesied in Revelations, xvi, 12, where it says, 'The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates and the water thereof was dried up.' I was informed that for many years now the amount of water in the Euphrates has been diminishing.

We went along this enormous bed of the Euphrates for twelve or thirteen miles, when it narrowed, although still far too wide for the shrunken river. We halted at Tassli Choi, a small village, and I had to put up in a poor underground house with some cows. The cows were few, and the stable tolerably clean. A Persian gentleman, who was stationed here as an agent of the Persian consul of Erzroum, called upon me and asked me to allow his son, Abdulla, to accompany me to Khoi, in Persia. He was a gentlemanly young man, was most useful to me on the road, and when we came

to Khoi he took me to his house, and entertained me most kindly. He was glad of the escort I had, as robbers were plentiful about the Persian border, a not unusual thing, as I heard years ago that the Hon. Charles Murray, when appointed British Minister in Persia, had written from this part of the world to his friends, saying that he could not get on because the Kurds (curds) were in the way (whey). I found this to be decidedly the case just now. The famine was very severe at Tassli Khoi. I paid 3s. 6d. for 2½lbs. of the commonest bread, equivalent to about 6s. for a quartern loaf. What an outcry there would be in England if the quartern loaf were 6s., but it was much worse to the people here than it would be with the people in England, for money is worth so much more, and wages are so much less. Money is here worth quite three times as much as it is in England. Thus really to represent the present distress, it would be not as if the quartern loaf were at 6s. in England but at three times that price. I was told that three deaths had occurred from starvation, and in one way or another this place brought home to me how terrible this famine really was. I had intended halting here a day, but determined to push on and get through the famine-stricken area.

9th May. Went to Deadin. On the right of the road there was a fine monastery and church, called Uteh Kalissa. The Euphrates is here crossed by a stone bridge, though at this season it can be forded, but I went over the bridge, and rode up to the monastery, which I found was defended by a strong wall, but in bad repair. The church was a handsome

building. I had met the Abbot of Uteh Kalissa at the kaimakan's house at Kara Kalissa, so I knew he was away. I found that the priest in charge was also away, and had locked the church door and taken the key with him. The people of the monastery had no key, so I contented myself with walking round the outside of the church, and admiring the fine masonry. It was by far the finest church I had seen since leaving Constantinople. The people about were very civil, and even offered to break open the padlock on the door. One very curious feature of this church was the small size of the doors. A man of moderate height would have to stoop on entering, and even one of these doors had been built up, leaving only one small entrance to this large church. Evidently this had been done for the purpose of defence. The fortifications round the church and the outbuildings were in very bad repair, but the church itself, so far as I could judge, seemed to be in very good order. I had been informed by the kaimakan of Kara Kalissa, who was a Lazi from Lazistan, that this church was built about 1060 years ago in the time of St Gregory the Illuminator, but I do not know where this worthy lived. The Lazis were once a Christian tribe, but at all events, since they were made over to Russia by the Treaty of Berlin, they have been hostile to Russia, and are strict Mahommedans.

After crossing the Euphrates we got into some fine grass land, which I believe belonged to the monastery. Deadin, where I spent the night, is a miserable village of underground houses, situated near the Euphrates. Above the banks of the river

are the remains of an imposing Genoese fort, which must originally have been a very large place. A building in the castle, which is still standing, is very fine. Large cut stones, well-fitted, thoroughly good mason's work, remain in a land where to-day the people's only idea of building a house is to dig a hole in the ground and then roof it. Certainly this part of Asia has declined in everything, and what is more sad, is still steadily going backwards. The population is diminishing, as is shown by the ruins of many houses in every village, and cultivation is also decreasing. The Turk away from Constantinople, though he is a good fellow and a brave soldier, is a miserably bad governor. The question is, however, who should replace him. The Christian population having been for long years kept out of all influential positions, is not fit to govern, and the various bodies of Christians, Armenian, Catholic, and Greek Church, would be very suspicious of one another and would not work together. Then there is Russia very near at hand, but when Russia is mentioned, even the Christians say that the Turkish Government, bad though it is, is preferable to the former. Though there is a dislike to the Turkish Government amongst the Christian population, there is a still greater dislike to the Russian Government. These people know what they are talking about, as they have Russian territory within a few hours' ride of their homes, and know the way their brethren are treated in Russian Armenia.

In Turkey there is bad government, or I should rather say there is an utter want of government, but nevertheless Turkey is the freest country in

the world, even for Christians. Anyone may go where he likes, say what he likes, do what he likes, hold forth against the Government, very often to the Pashas' very faces, but so long as he does not raise a revolt against the Government, no one will take any notice of him. I know that in Constantinople there is a censorship of the press, but this is purely a western notion, and is a very repulsive idea to all Turkish notions, which allow of the utmost freedom of speech. A slave may say what he likes to the Sultan; that is the Oriental notion. Of course the Oriental notion also allows the slave to receive a blow in return, but the law of the Koran would never sanction such punishment for freedom of speech. The fault of the Turk is not in what he does, but in what he leaves undone. Capital punishment is practically done away with for any offence, and taxes are low. While the taxes in Russia, though not high according to western ideas, are much higher than in Turkey. As a very intelligent Armenian said to me, "We do not want the Russian Government, but we do want a share in our own Government." There are illegal imposts levied in Turkey by the Pashas, but I very much doubt if they are more burdensome to the people than those levied in Russia. And in fact, they bear the same sort of relation to the Government taxes that the King's taxes do in England to the rates levied by the borough council, which in England takes the place of the Pasha, and I do not think their being legally levied helps the matter. Certainly the Pasha would be contented with a much smaller proportion of one's income than what the

Council expects. To take a case. In Turkey there is no police rate, but police are kept up; if two policemen are sent in pursuit of a robber, and stay a night at the village, they demand food for themselves and their horses, and this is acknowledged as a fair cess against the village, and would not amount in the year to anything like what a householder in England pays as his police-rate. In France and Germany, troops are quartered on the people, and have to be fed by them, and this is considered no hardship. That some abuses do arise in Turkey there is no doubt, as they do also in London in the levying of rates. It is not wonderful, therefore, that in a country like Turkey abuses do sometimes occur.

My quarters in Deadin were in a rather dirty cow-house with many cows. The kaimakan asked me to go to his house, but as he had in the first instance sent me to this one, and I had settled down here, I thanked him, and declined. Another reason was that I wanted to do some writing, and one can have no privacy in a Turkish house, where one room is both sitting-room and bedroom for the whole of the male members of the family.

The source of the Euphrates is situated close to this place, in fact, as a river, this may be said to be its beginning.

May 10th. I got away early, as I was anxious, if possible, to cross the Persian border to-day. I had been promised an escort of cavalry by the Turkish kaimakan, but they never turned up, and after waiting some time, I had to start with four wretched-looking footmen, who would certainly have



been of no use if robbers had appeared. My servant was in a desperate state of alarm about robbers, and the two Persian gentlemen who accompanied me were also very anxious.

We went through a sort of easy pass between some low hills, with a ruined stone guard-house, a remnant of a more civilised age when trade was protected. Soon after starting I heard a shot in front, and galloped up to find out what it was. It proved only to be my head mule-man, who had fired off his pistol, and then re-loaded it, so as to be ready to fire again. After about five miles, the four footmen supplied by the kaimakan refused to go any further, and returned to Deadin. They would have been of very little use, and personally I was not sorry to be rid of them. It was very wrong of the kaimakan at Deadin to send these men, as he had received orders from the Pasha of Erzroum to supply me with an escort of cavalry. I had myself taken him the order, and I know he had six mounted policemen in the place.

We went on very pleasantly after my escort had left us. Some men were seen on the left of the road at a small village, and were pronounced to be a body of robbers, but they did not in any way interfere with us. My companions, except the head mule-man, were decidedly a timid set of people, and my servant was especially careful of his skin. The head mule-man, although an Armenian, was, strange to say, a brave man.

Presently we met a very fine-looking Kurd, well-dressed and accompanied by a mounted servant, who proved to be the head man of the village of Kizzil

Deeza. He utterly refused to give us any men to accompany us, saying it was impossible to cross the frontier at present without a strong escort, as twenty mounted robbers, having taken up a position just on the Persian side of the frontier, were plundering everybody. My companions entreated me not to proceed, but to go into the town of Bayazid, which was some six miles distant, and get an escort from the Pasha. I was anxious to see Bayazid, which had been so celebrated only two years previously for the attack made on it by the Russians, so I finally determined to go there. It was very hot, and the country barren, as we plodded along to Bayazid. On our left rose the mighty cone of Ararat. Certainly Ararat is the most majestic mountain I have ever seen. Though it is only 15,870 feet high (about the same height as Mont Blanc), which stamps it as a pigmy amongst Asiatic mountains, there is something very striking about its form and vastness, and the stupendous cone of unsullied snow which rises to the sky, while below the enormous mass of the dark mountain has a glorious effect. Also there are no other mountain peaks very near to detract from the sense of height and vastness. The lesser peak of Ararat is some distance off, and does not spoil the majestic effect. I gazed and gazed on Ararat. I had been on the look-out for it for many days, but only caught sight of it first after leaving Deadin, and did not get the full and glorious view of it until I approached Bayazid. It filled one's mind with thoughts of Noah and the Deluge as one gazed on this giant mountain where local tradition has placed the

stranding of the ark after the Flood. The Armenians believe that the ark is still preserved on the lofty summit, and view as impious any attempt to scale its dizzy heights. The Kurds who live in the neighbourhood also refuse to join or help any party attempting the ascent of the mountain. The summit was, however, reached a few years ago by a party of English travellers, and one account of the ascent has been published in the proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society. A party of English travellers had also been at or near the summit last year (*i.e.*, 1879), but of this ascent there is no well-authenticated record. Parties of Russians also claim to have made the ascent, but there is some dispute as to whether they actually reached the highest point, though they have erected a monument in the form, I believe, of a cross, on the plateau near the summit. I do not think it would be a very difficult summit to ascend for good mountaineers, but, of course, having to go without guides or assistance, makes it more difficult than the ascent of Mont Blanc or mountains of similar altitude. If I had been here later in the season, I should have tried to make an ascent, but it was much too early in the year for it to be practicable, and the snow extended too far down the mountain for any attempt to be successful. Anyone wishing to make an ascent should come in the early autumn, probably the end of September would be the best time of year. Another obstacle at present is the utter want of food in Bayazid. I myself very much doubt if this mountain can be the Ararat of Scripture. There is another mountain claiming to be Ararat in the mountain

chain which bounds the Assyrian plain near Moosul or Nineveh, and the claim of this mountain to be the Ararat of Scripture is much more justifiable than that of the mountain I had been gazing on with such admiration. If the ark had rested anywhere near the summit of this mountain, it would have been excessively difficult for the animals to have got down. Even if this obstacle had been overcome, there would still remain the almost impossible problem of feeding and housing the animals during the almost Arctic winter which prevails about here, when all animals have to be carefully sheltered and fed on food previously collected. A series of miracles would have been required to provide this food and shelter, and we are nowhere told in the Bible that such was the case. All these difficulties are done away with if the more southern mountain bordering the Assyrian plain is accepted as the true Ararat of the Bible.

Another reason that I would bring forward for what it is worth, is that although Mahommedan and Christian tradition usually agree, they do *not* agree about this mountain being Ararat, nor connected in any way with Noah, but place Noah's Ararat far to the southward.\* At this point three great kingdoms meet, portions of Mount Ararat belonging severally to Russia, Turkey, and Persia.

Bayazid is a curious-looking town. It has a

\* A legend current in Palestine, and amongst Mahommedans in the neighbouring countries, about the ark states that it came to the site of Mecca and there rested for seven days. At the end of this period it moved northward till it reached the site of Jerusalem where it discharged its living freight. This story agrees, in the main, with the above in that Ararat in Armenia is not looked upon as the last resting-place of the Ark. [B. S.]

wonderful castle in very good preservation, perched on a high crag with walls on one side rising quite 100 feet from the precipice below, and on all sides is most inaccessible. It was captured by the Russians in 1877, and held most gallantly by a very small Russian garrison against Kurd Ismail Pasha, the then Pasha of Erzroum, and a large Turkish army.

Here, I am sorry to say this Pasha allowed his Kurdish troops to behave in the most infamous manner. A portion of the Russian garrison surrendered themselves as prisoners of war, and delivered their arms to the Turks. After a little while, a mass of marauding Kurds appeared on the scene, and massacred the greater part of the unarmed Russian prisoners. Some of them were rescued and sent to Erzroum. They were, however, stripped naked by the Kurds and a further large batch were massacred on the road to Erzroum, only a small number reaching that city alive.

Those of the garrison still within the castle, upon seeing that their comrades, who had surrendered, were massacred without pity, shut the gates, and determined to die fighting. They were so successful in their resistance, that, in spite of great privation, they held the castle until they were relieved, and the garrison successfully carried off by General Dergukassof. This relief of Bayazid by the Russians was a brilliant feat of arms, as it was carried out in the face of a much more numerous Turkish army.

The water supply of the fort of Bayazid can easily be cut off, so the Russians suffered much for want of water. The castle would be a very difficult place to capture by escalade. There are, however, no

bomb-proof shelters within, and if heavily bombarded it would only become a shell-trap.

I sent a letter of introduction I had to the Pasha, and he had a nice clean room prepared for me in the house of one of his staff. As soon as I dressed, I called upon the Pasha, who asked me to dinner, an invitation I was very glad to accept, as no food seemed procurable in the town.

After calling on the Pasha, I went out to see the town. He sent a very smart-looking sergeant of a regular Turkish regiment to accompany me, and I asked him to take me up to the fort and show me the citadel, which he did. Of course, having the Pasha's orderly sergeant with me, no difficulty was made, and I was taken all over it. Inside there was a small but beautiful mosque which, I am sorry to say, the Russians had very seriously damaged. When they saw their comrades being massacred by the Kurds, the officers probably lost control over their men, and hence this wanton destruction.

The Pasha gave me a good dinner in the evening, and in the morning sent me off across the frontier on May 11th, to Avajik, the first village in Persia. He sent a strong escort consisting of three mounted police and six infantry soldiers of a regular Turkish regiment. As soon as I saw these fellows I felt pretty safe that no robbers would attack me. Soon after we crossed the Turkish frontier, a number of ruffians, Kurds of sorts, were seen pretending to be grazing some sheep, and were, there can be very little doubt, robbers, but as soon as they saw my escort, they were very civil. I do not think Kurdish marauders care at all to meet these Turkish regular soldiers, though they occasion-

ally fight with zaphies, or Turkish mounted police, who are decidedly inferior to the Turkish regulars, whether cavalry or infantry. The Pasha of Bayazid had sent a letter to the Persian Governor, and I also sent him one which had been given to me for him by the Persian Consul at Erzroum. Both letters were addressed to Surtip (or General) Padsha Khan, who lived in the village of Kalissa. He sent out an "estikbal" or welcoming party to meet me, and himself met me near his house. He was a nice-looking Persian gentleman, about fifty, dressed in a French grey military greatcoat, with silver buttons with the Russian eagle on them. Usually the Persians have buttons with the lion and sun of Persia on them as the General's son had on his greatcoat. I was conducted into the guest-house, a most comfortable building, where I was introduced to the Governor's two brothers and two sons. The sons were fine fellows of about twenty, and were good specimens of young Persian gentlemen. The whole party were darker than Persians usually are. They said they were "Iliats," or tent-dwellers, but that they had given up living in tents. They had formerly dwelt at Alexandropol or Gumri, but on that country being taken by Russia in 1829, they had emigrated to Persian territory. No doubt they were not Persians by race but Turks like the Shah himself. I mentioned that there was some reason to expect war between Russia and China on account of the Kuldja difficulty, which interested them very much as they longed to go back to their own home at Gumri, but they would never do so as long as Russia ruled there. I found that none of the

present party had ever been at Gumri, the emigration having taken place in the time of the father of Padsha Khan. They took me out to the fine stone church from which their village takes its name of Kalissa, or the church village. The church had no roof but in all other respects it was in good order. It was built with great blocks of stone, one of the lintels of the door being eight feet long by five feet broad, and very thick. At present the people are quite unable to build in cut stone, their idea of building, (even in the places where they have got beyond digging a hole, roofing it and then calling it a house, as they do in Armenia,) only amounts to a house with round stones set in mud mortar. General Padsha Khan's house was a great advance, even on this, as it had burnt brick foundations to the walls of rubble masonry. There was no inscription or date about the church to show when it was built, but from the size of the stone and the excellence of the work it must have been long ago. In all these lands, the older the building the better the workmanship. The population is going back in everything, even in numbers.

A proof that General Padsha Khan was an advanced man in his ideas was that he was planting a great many trees. No trees grow in this part of the world naturally, they require not only to be planted but also to be constantly watered. He took me to see his garden; it would not have been very wonderful in any other part of the world, but after weeks spent without seeing trees, it was pleasant to visit any sort of garden. In it there were plenty of poplars and willows just ready to burst into leaf,



a good many rose bushes, and a few common flowers and herbs, such as mint. It is a curious thing how many sorts of herbs nearly all Persian gardens contain, mint, thyme, marjoram, and black basil. A Persian would not consider a breakfast complete unless some black basil was on the table to be eaten as a sort of salad. The gardens surrounded the "anderûn," or women's apartment, and before taking me in one of the sons was sent to warn the ladies to keep out of the way. I liked Padsha Khan very much; he reminded me of an old-fashioned English gentleman, as he took me round to look at his planting and his improvements. He had six sons who were good horsemen, and some of them at least were very good shots. He told me his eldest son could split a bullet on the blade of a knife with his rifle. Persians are good horsemen, and very often also good shots. Near Shiraz I saw a young Persian noble hit a copper coin thrown up into the air with a bullet, and he repeated the feat many times.

The population of Azarbiajan, the province of Persia I had just entered, being Turks make much better soldiers than the southern Persians, and the chief part of the army of Persia is recruited in this district. Whatever Christian population there may have been in this part of the world has entirely disappeared, and everyone about here is now Mahommedan.

I sent a letter to the Pasha of Bayazid by the returning escort, thanking him for his hospitality and kindness, and I presented the escort with £2 for themselves, with which they were much pleased.

## CHAPTER V

### TABRIZ

12TH MAY. I rode off, accompanied by the son of Padsha Khan, and a large following of mounted men. This was to do me honour. They accompanied me as far as the next village, about three-quarters of a mile, and from thence I went on with two mounted men, and two armed footmen as an escort. Padsha Khan had warned me that the whole road I had to travel, almost up to Khoi, was infested by robbers, and that I was never to travel without an escort. To-day I did meet five men who, I believe, really were robbers. At a spot where the road was very bad, five men, with their rifles ready, were sitting on a small hillock by the roadside. Ours was too strong a party (as there were nine of us, who, they could see, were all well armed) for them to attack, and they allowed us to pass, but some of my escort, who seemed to know them, went up and spoke to them.

The country I passed through was here fertile and well cultivated, and though great scarcity at present prevailed, there was every prospect of a fine harvest. To-day the willow trees were be-

coming green, and there was an attempt on the part of some of the poplars to burst into leaf.

As I approached Kara Zenéh, which is a large village, I sent on one of my mounted men with a letter I had received from Padsha Khan to Hassein Khan, a Kurdish chief who ruled this place. On arrival I went to Hassein Khan's house, but found it locked up, and he and all his family away. They were "Iliats" or wanderers, and during the summer the whole family lived in tents, this place being only their "kishlak" or winter quarter. I had to put up in a wretched underground house, which was all I could get. I sent off a mounted man with a letter from General Padsha Khan to Hassein Khan, who was encamped at some hot springs about one hour's ride from Kara Zenéh. He sent back a letter to his secretary here, ordering him to do anything I wanted. I answered that the only thing I wanted was an escort of two mounted men, which, after a little difficulty, I received in the morning.

13th May. General Padsha Khan had especially warned me not to leave this village without an escort, as the people were notorious, even among the Kurds, as robbers, and I should certainly be robbed, unless I had some men from Hussein Khan, their chief, to show I was under his protection. As soon as I was furnished with two mounted men, I left, feeling quite comfortable. On the road, I met some people who declared they had been robbed, though I did not feel certain that their statement was true, but that they made it an excuse for begging.

The distance to Zorawur, my halting place to-day,

was twenty-four miles. There was another large village close by called Ali Sheikh, and both looked nice and clean. I got a good room, what the Persians call a "balahkaneh" (from whence our English word balcony), usually a room with the whole front open. In this case, the front was filled in with lattice-work, as it was intended for ladies, but this could be opened. I fully appreciated this nice clean room with good Persian carpets, after the dirty underground place I had been in the day before. The head-man of Zorawur made no difficulty about supplying the two mounted men I asked for. He said, however, that most of their cattle and many of their horses had died for want of food.

May 14th. No trouble this morning with the escort; the men were ready waiting for me, and the head man had come with them to see me off. I had a long journey before me, the distance to Khoi being about twenty-six miles. After we had reached about half way, we came upon gardens, and when we arrived within eight miles, or so, of Khoi, the whole country was one continuous garden, while the willows and poplars, which had hitherto been the only trees, were replaced by walnuts, apricots, plums, pear-trees, also by a tree called "sinjak" by the Persians. It bears a small brown fruit, which is sold dried in winter, and is liked by the natives, though not palatable to the European taste. The fruit looks like the Indian "biar" (pronounce *bear*), or *ziziphus zuzuba*, but the tree is very different.

At five miles short of Khoi we halted at a caravanserai, situated in a very flourishing village, to give the horses a feed, and we did not reach Khoi,

which proved to be a large town, until two in the afternoon. Abdulla, the young Persian who had invited me to his house and who had accompanied me from Tassli Khoi, took me in. I found his house a small but very pretty one, standing in a nice garden, with cherry and pear-trees in full blossom. Flowers were coming up, and a grapevine was trailing over the trellis-work. The front of the house was towards the garden, the back showing a blank wall without any windows. Downstairs there were, I believe, four rooms, two for the men, and two others, separated by a passage, for the women. Upstairs there was only one room, the whole front of which was open, and looked on to the garden. This room was very prettily furnished, and the front was closed with lattice-work. My friend, the builder, who had brought me, was the only son of the household, and had been away with his father in Turkey for six months. The family consisted of his mother, his wife, and a widowed sister with her two children, a nice little boy of seven and a little girl about twenty months old. There appeared to be another female member of the household beside Abdullah's wife, but I did not like to ask for any information about them, further than that volunteered by Abdullah. They were a middle-class Persian family, fairly well off, but not rich, as they kept no servant, but did everything for themselves. The women went about strictly veiled, and I spoke a few words to Abdullah's mother. About five o'clock Abdullah and I went to the public bath to have a Turkish bath. It was very enlightened of the people here to let a Christian enter their bath, a

favour not usually granted in Persia. Khoi, however, being near Turkey, they follow the Turkish customs, which allow Christians to go to the public baths.

In the evening, my friend Abdullah brought me a very nice dinner on a tray, with two sorts of sherbert to drink, one sweet and one sour, the latter prepared with sour milk. There was boiled rice with melted butter poured over it, and a sort of soup to take with it, made of sour milk and cabbage, which was good; also a saucer of stewed meat with pickled green peas in it, and a basin of sour curd and bread to eat. My host, I regretted, would not dine with me, as only the higher class of Persian will eat with a Christian. Few of the middle classes, and none of the lower, will do so, there being a prejudice against it. At Bayazid, however, General Padsha Khan, being a rather important personage, did dine with me.

On the 15th May, about 8 a.m., I went to call upon the Prince-Governor of Khoi, and found it was a long distance to the palace, Khoi being a large town. A small stream of running water flows down the centre of the streets, and is bordered by poplars and willows. After riding about a mile we came to a large fort, built of unburnt brick, and partially constructed according to modern ideas, which would render it very difficult for anyone to take without modern artillery. The fort is also surrounded by a wide and deep ditch. Part of the town is contained within the fort, and the Prince's palace is situated in a central position in it. On turning out of the street, one first enters a large

courtyard where a few old-fashioned brass guns, about twelve pounds, were parked. They were field guns, and would no doubt be used as field artillery, but I do not think they had any horses or other means of moving them. In Persia, the artillery horses are, during the whole summer, kept out at grass to save the cost of feeding them. Round the square were quarters for soldiers; a long passage led out of the square, and we went down this to a door, where a guard of infantry was stationed, armed with breach-loaders of the Schneider pattern, but their rifles were fearfully dirty and neglected. I am certain any breach-loader would soon get out of order if treated as these men treat their rifles. I left my horse near the guard, and walked through the guard-room into a courtyard where there were trees and flowers. At the end of this courtyard was an open room with an awning projecting from the front. I was admitted into this room, and was met at the door by a very nice-looking Persian; the Kajar Princes are, as a rule, very good-looking men. We talked for some time and he said I should have come to stay with him, instead of going elsewhere. He called my entertainer and told him to take care of me. He asked my name, and giving me a pen requested me to write it. I naturally wrote my name in Persian characters and gave it him. He was surprised that I could write Persian, and said, "I am astonished that you can write Persian, please write it also in Frank character." So I also wrote my name in English characters. The Prince asked me whether I spoke Turki as well as Persian. I was obliged

to confess I did not at that time speak Turki, though I did learn some in the course of this visit to Persia.

The Prince promised me an escort to accompany me on my journey to be at my quarters at 12 o'clock that day, and he sent a servant with me, so as to know where I was staying.

An Armenian Christian connected with the American Presbyterian Mission at Tabriz, called upon me. He was a "colporteur," and sold Bibles and other books, and also kept a boys' school connected with the Mission. It was fortunate for the mission school that this man did call upon me, because some years afterwards, when I was the British Consul-General at Tabriz, an order came from the Shah to close all mission schools which had not been started before a certain date, and I was able to prevent the closing of this school, because I could certify to the Governor-General of Azarbiajan that I had visited Khoi many years previously, and had found the school then in existence. Great scarcity prevailed on this occasion in Khoi, beggars swarmed all over the place, and miserable little babies just able to speak were laid about in every direction to beg for food. I think few people gave them any money, but kindly women sometimes gave them a little food, so I hope in the course of the day the poor little creatures managed to pick up enough to eat.

At 12 o'clock, one horseman arrived from the Prince to escort me on the road towards Tabriz. Before I had had two mounted men, but I gladly accepted the one, as it would be quite safe to travel



with only one man known to belong to the Prince-Governor. A fine straight road leads from Khoi to Saitadji, whither I was bound to-day. Saitadji is a large and fairly fertile village, about fourteen miles from Khoi. A Nestorian Christian, belonging to the American Presbyterian Mission at Tabriz, who was riding post through this village to-day, called upon me. He had some tea with me, and I found we had a good many common acquaintances among the American Presbyterian Missionaries in Persia.

To-day, May 16th, being Sunday, I halted, and had a thorough day's rest. At this place I had cooked with rice some of the 'pastreneh' which I had purchased in Erzroum. I had it steeped for twelve hours in cold water, and afterwards stewed for a long time, but even then it required good teeth to eat it, and I cannot say it was good, though a hungry man might appreciate it.

May 17th. Made a very early start, as the march was twenty-three miles to-day. About a mile after leaving the village, the road entered a pass which continued for some three miles. At the top of the pass there was a plateau, where we found a party of travellers in great distress, having just been beaten and robbed of almost all they possessed, except their donkeys, by a band of robbers. The robbers, they said, who were twenty in number and mounted, had taken everything of any value they possessed, including two loaded guns. I said to them, "It is hardly worth while carrying guns to present to robbers, if that is the only use you can make of them." I should doubt whether as many as twenty mounted robbers were collected in this neighbour-

hood, but that these people had been beaten and robbed this very morning was evident.

From this plateau there is a sudden descent for somewhat more than a mile, when a great plain is reached, and one then sees ahead the great Lake or Sea of Urumiah extending for miles and miles. It was not a very clear day, and there was haze on the lake. This piece of water is very similar to many others in Asia. It is very salt, far saltier even than the Dead Sea, and no fish can live in it. Along the edge in many places there is a white bank of salt left by the retiring water. Small waves were breaking on the shore, and there were islands in the lake. Of the salt lakes found in Asia, the Urumiah Lake comes fourth as regards size, the three larger being the Caspian Sea, the Aaral Sea, and Lake Baikal in Siberia. The degree of saltiness varies, some being merely brackish, others salt, far saltier than the ocean. Urumiah Lake is about eighty-two miles long, and about twenty-five miles wide at its greatest breadth. There is a great want of life about it, as there were no boats on its surface, though boats do cross it at one point. Flamingoes, however, frequent its shores, and it seems curious how this splendid bird likes very salt water. I shot a very fine specimen on the Kullar Kahar Salt Lake in the Punjab, a lake which is simply saturated with brine, and is the home of many flamingoes and other wild fowl. The theory, I believe, about salt lakes, is that if a lake has a river or rivers falling into it, but no outlet, it is always salt, or at least brackish, while if a river only runs through it, the water is almost invariably fresh. The explanation of this is that

when a river runs into a lake which has no outlet, it carries down the salt contained in the soil into the lake, which, in the course of ages, becomes salt. Evaporation is continually going on from the surface of the lake, but the salts of the soil remain and accumulate in the bed of the lake, thus rendering the water salt. In Persia, where the soil is naturally full of salt, and where even the rivers are often salt, this process would be accelerated.

Urumiah, a considerable town with a large Christian population, is situated near the south-western side of the lake to which it gives its name. Urumiah has had a large American Presbyterian Mission there since 1842, and has latterly also had a Church of England Mission, generally known as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission. There is also the Roman Catholic Mission. I believe there are altogether twenty-seven missionaries of these three denominations at this place, and just because there are so many, I hear a large Russian Church Mission is about to be established there; while many a town in Persia with a large Christian population has no mission at all. Though much relief was given by the missionaries to both the Christian and Mahommedan population, the suffering from famine in Urumiah was very severe. In a report forwarded by the Missions at Urumiah to the British Consul-General at Tabriz, they stated that, in spite of all they could do, the distress at Urumiah was still very great, and that three women had been found eating a child in the extremity of their hunger. Large sums were sent from England by Lady Strangford's fund, and also from private individuals at Manchester

through Messrs. Ziegler & Co., who are merchants in Tabriz and Manchester. These sums were applied for purchasing food for the starving, both in Tabriz and Urumiah.

Soon after reaching the plain where the lake is situated, I met a party of three Persian cavalry soldiers who had piled their arms by the roadside, and were keeping watch for robbers. This is the first time, either in Turkey or Persia, that I had seen any attempt made to guard the road. Two of these men went away, and came back in about three-quarters of an hour with their horses to escort me on my journey, while the mounted man, who had been supplied me by the Prince at Khoi, and who had accompanied me so far returned. I gave him a very handsome present, more than was usually my custom, and though my escort were generally well pleased with what they received, this man was not, thus proving he was not a soldier at all, but a private servant or hanger-on of some sort of the Prince, and had accompanied me in the hope of getting an enormous present. He was a man who had lived in foreign lands, and spoke no Persian, but Turkish and Wallachian, having served six years in the Roumanian army. My new escort were much pleased, and were most profuse in their thanks for the present I gave them on parting, though I gave them less than I had given the Wallachian. The whole march skirted the lake, and we arrived at a pretty village with plenty of trees, named Tassi. Here I obtained a nice upstairs room and was very comfortable.

May 18th. Rode along the shores of the Urumiah lake, the road skirting it at various distances from

half a mile or less to a mile and a half, through a fertile country with good crops and fruit trees, chiefly apricots, until we reached the village of Shabister about twenty-five miles from Tassi. The sun was very hot, my nose was skinned by it, and my face was very much burnt and tanned by the constant exposure.

At Shabister I was obliged to put up in a dirty caravanseri. The next day, the 19th May, I got off at quarter past five in the morning, and had my last distant view of the Urumiah lake. I rode eighteen miles to the post-station of Sofian, the post-master of which would not supply me with a horse, nor could I get a mounted man to accompany me. While I was waiting here, the Tartar carrying the Russian post for the Russian Consul at Tabriz arrived, as also the Tartar carrying the Persian post. It appears the post-master is bound to supply these Tartars with horses before travellers. I also met here Mr Fabray in the service of the Indo-European Telegraph Company. He was proceeding to Tiflis, as I was now on the main road to Russia. After giving my pony an hour's rest and a good feed, I accompanied the Tartar on the way to Tabriz. My pony, the same I had ridden all the way from Erzroum, although he had done eighteen miles to-day, went the twenty miles to Tabriz far better than the post-horses supplied to the Tartars, which were supposed to be quite fresh. In Tabriz I rode up to the British Consulate, and introduced myself to Mr Abbott, the British Consul-General. I had known him fourteen years before, when he was British Consul at Resht, and he very kindly asked me to stay with him.

Tabriz is a very large city, according to the natives the largest in Persia, being even of greater extent than Teheran the capital. It is very difficult to compute the number of inhabitants of any Eastern town; no census is ever taken, as the people not only excessively dislike it, but consider it wrong, and believe it would cause a pestilence, to say nothing of the fact that they would certainly connect it with either a poll tax or else conscription. All Orientals look upon a census as a wicked proceeding. The population of Tabriz is usually reckoned at 200,000, but I should think this is in excess of the real number, and that 130,000 would be nearer the mark. The town covers an enormous extent of ground, but a great deal of this is taken up by gardens, as all the better class of houses have a garden attached to them. The chief feature of the place is the "ark" or citadel, a very high burnt-brick building, surrounded by a mud wall. It is said to have been built by our old friend of the Arabian Nights' Entertainment, Haroun Alraschid.\* When one meets with a building said to have been constructed by this individual (and I also purchased a coin here struck by him), one begins to feel that one is really in the East. Generally the East fades away as one approaches it, and moves further and further east.

The British Consulate is the finest house in Tabriz. It was built as a Legation when the British Minister resided at Tabriz and not at Teheran, and is in

\* If English people could only be persuaded to pronounce his name as he would have done himself, it is a pretty name. Ha-roum Ur Ra-schide.

the form of a square, while the space in the centre is very prettily laid out as a garden. This is, I think, far the best form for a house in Persia. I went with Mr Abbot to call upon the agent for Foreign affairs, and found a highly cultivated gentleman, a Turk of Tabriz, who spoke French well, and had been Persian Minister at St Petersburg. His residence at St Petersburg had enlarged his ideas, and a Persian gentleman of the better class has always most courtly manners. The Persians are the French of the East, and could give lessons in manners to the people of any country. I asked if the Crown Prince of Persia (Wali Ahid is his title) would grant me an interview. He said he would ask the Prince to do so. The Crown Prince of Persia is very seldom the King's eldest son, as the Shah always chooses as his successor a son borne by a Kajar wife, the Kajars being the Royal tribe of Persia, and, of course, as the Shah has many wives (I believe the number at present is sixty-three), it does not often happen that the son chosen is the eldest. In the present case he is not so. I also called upon the different European Consuls, and upon the representative of Messrs Ziegler & Co., who are Manchester merchants dealing chiefly in carpets, when I was shown a very ancient and valuable Persian carpet. It was about ten feet long by about eight feet broad, and was valued at £300. I myself preferred some of the more modern carpets which could be purchased for a much more moderate sum. Carpets were cheap just now, as the people, in consequence of the famine, were willing to part with very valuable possessions. Ancient carpets are treasured up in

families as heirlooms. It was explained to me that the difference between a good Turkish carpet and a good Persian one was that the former would only last a lifetime, while the latter would last for ever. The best are made by women, both Christian and Mahommedan, in their own houses. A good carpet, 6 feet by 4 feet, will employ a woman for several months working hard, and fetches about £3. 10s., though they can be bought at all prices according to size and quality, down to about ten shillings for a small one. The carpets of large size are generally manufactured by men in factories.

The Foreign Agent sent to tell me that the Crown Prince would see me at 9 a.m. the next day. Mr Abbott accompanied me on my visit. We were received at the palace by the Foreign Agent, who gave us tea and cigarettes, as is usual in Persia at a visit, but it would not have been etiquette to take these in the presence of the Prince. We were then conducted into another room and received by the Prince, who was standing. No one under the rank of an Ambassador or Minister is allowed to sit in the presence of the Shah or the Crown Prince. Afterwards, when I myself was for several years the British Consul-General at Tabriz, I became well acquainted with Wali Ahid, who is the present Shah of Persia.\* The Crown Prince had a Deputy-Governor until lately, who ruled for him, as when he was first appointed he was a little boy, but now he rules in his own right. The heir-apparent of the Persian throne is always sent as nominal Governor to Tabriz, when he is ten years old. It

\* *i e.*, at the time this diary was written in 1899.



is said the air of the Palace at Teheran is particularly unwholesome to whoever may be chosen to be the heir-apparent, and they generally die suddenly and in early youth, the other wives of the Shah hoping that, if the son chosen as heir-apparent can be got rid of, their own son may be selected. Even the difficulty about only a son of a royal wife being chosen, has, I know in one instance, been got over. The son of a lady who was the daughter of a carpenter, was once selected, the court genealogist having proved her descent from the Amir Timour, but I need not say the air of the harem did not agree with that child, as he died shortly afterwards. The eldest son of the Shah is Governor of Ispahan, with the title of 'Zil-es-Sultan,' or Shadow of the Sultan. On one occasion, at Teheran, when they were both boys, the Zil-es-Sultan took his younger brother, the heir-apparent or Wali Ahid, and ducked him well in a tank within the Palace grounds, saying, "You may be the heir-apparent, but I will teach you to respect your elder brother."

At my interview at Tabriz, the Prince first spoke in Persian to me, but latterly in French which he spoke fairly well. After conversing for about twenty minues, we withdrew.

The famine at this time was still very severe in Tabriz, and the Shah sent large quantities of provisions to alleviate the distress. I tried to purchase horses but could not get any fit for work, while the horses at the post-station were quite unfit for riding. After much difficulty, I discovered a man with three fairly good horses who agreed to take me to Zengan on the road to Teheran for twelve tomans, worth then about £5.

## CHAPTER VI

### A SEARCH FOR A GOLD MINE

ON the 29th May I succeeded in starting from Tabriz, and rode ten miles to Washmish, putting up at a fair caravanseri, where I halted for the next day, which was Sunday.

On the 31st May I started about a quarter to 5 a.m., traversing a well-cultivated country with frequent villages. To-day on the road, I passed a small fresh-water lake named Gurri Gul, where there were many coots and some ruddy sheldrakes swimming about. The sheldrakes were very wary and I could not get near them.

1st June. Started early, and went through a fertile country to Gedjun, a good-sized village, distance about twenty-one miles.

2nd June. Rode to Turkomanchi, distance about nineteen miles. The road was very trying to the horses, as they were weak, and the continually ascending and descending road tired them. The wheat-fields were pleasant to look upon. This was quite the most fertile stretch of country I had seen since leaving Europe.

Turkomanchi is celebrated for a species of nocturnal

biting insect, which is very poisonous. Its bite is said to cause violent fever, and I have known many persons suffer seriously from it, and in some cases, if it bites a person of a weak constitution it causes his death. It is a species of grey bug of a large size, and is called *Argas Persicus*. Meani, the next stage from this, is its headquarters, but now it had spread to Turkomanchi, and a few of the neighbouring villages. Persians are really very much afraid of it. An English gentleman, whom I met in Constantinople, and who wanted to 'pull my leg,' on hearing that I was going to Persia, gave me a description of a certain night that he had passed in Meani.

He said, "I did not wish to pass a night in Meani, where I arrived very tired, but I could procure no post-horses, so had to spend the night at the post-station. I had heard such dreadful accounts of *Argas Persicus* that, for fear of going to sleep at Meani, I bribed the postboy to flog me up and down the post-station till morning, when I was able to proceed." I need hardly add this was a traveller's tale. I, however, slept very comfortably at Turkomanchi, but I had my bed surrounded with a layer of Persian insect powder. Though it is called 'Persian insect powder,' it is not grown in Persia, but is much used there. It is grown in Dalmatia and about the shores of the Adriatic, also, I believe, in Smyrna. It is most useful against every sort of creeping insect, but is no protection against flying ones.

From Turkomanchi, on the 3rd June, I proceeded about twenty-two miles. The road was fairly good, but there were a great many sharp ascents and

descents, especially when one reached the banks of the Diza Shah river. The road follows the bank of this river for about five miles into Meani. This river comes down in high flood during the early spring when the snow is melting, but at present there was only a very small stream of water in it. The country was not so fertile as on the previous marches from Tabriz. Meani has a Governor, and a telegraph station of the Indo-European Company which connects it with all towns in Europe. As the post-horse station was celebrated for its dirt and insect population, I carefully avoided it, but went instead to the new telegraph station, which had not yet been invaded by the insect pest. I was very civilly received and put up by Mr Avnatamow, the telegraph signaller in charge. He was a Georgian from Tiflis and his father was painter to the Shah. Though he had been long in Persia, he felt the isolation very keenly. He spoke English well, and said, except for about fifteen travellers a year who stayed with him on their way through Meani, he never saw a European. He had been stationed here for four years without a change, and was very anxious to get leave or to be moved to some other post.

Meani has a mosque with a dome of blue tiles, and a minaret of a curious form. Mosques with domes covered with blue tiles are common in Persia but this was the first I had seen on this road.

4th June. I started at 5 a.m. this day, and crossed the river by a brick bridge which was fast going to ruin. I traversed a range of mountains named the Kafan Koh which divide the provinces of Azarbiajan and Arak, in which Teheran is situated.

The road over the Kaflan Koh is bad, yet unladen waggons manage to get over somehow, but it is a difficult undertaking, and it is a great pity that a good road is not constructed. The famine would never have attained such proportions if there had been a tolerable road from Teheran. I used daily to meet great numbers of camels, mules, ponies and donkeys, laden with wheat bound for Tabriz, but the amount of both animal and human labour wasted owing to the bad means of communication is fearful. If the men who are employed in driving these animals were set to work for a year on making a road, a good one could be constructed which would be a lasting monument of the Shah's reign.

After passing the Kaflan Koh, we crossed a river named the Kyzyl Uzein, which falls into the Caspian near Resht. Under the central arch of the brick bridge crossing this stream there were thousands of swallows' nests, and the whole of the inside of the arch was covered with them. The swallows had discovered that this was a perfectly safe place in which to build their nests. After passing the river another range of mountains was crossed, and then came the poor village of Jumlabad where are situated the ruins of a fine caravanseri built by Shah Abbas the Great. Outside the village was a garden belonging to the Crown Prince, where I had my bed laid out under an apricot tree. The apricot trees in Persia are often very large, sometimes as large as a small oak in England.

Though we had only come eleven and a half miles, the sun was so hot, and the roads so steep, that the horses were quite unfit to

proceed, so I remained here until a quarter to 4 p.m., and then started for Serebeen.

The country between Jumlabad and Serebeen was quite uninhabited and uncultivated, as there was no water until the neighbourhood of Serebeen was reached. I arrived at Serebeen about a quarter to eight in the evening. As the sun was now so hot in the daytime, I started early at three the next morning, but found the horses very tired after yesterday's work. They were indeed poor beasts, though not particularly thin, but had been so starved in the winter that they had no strength.

After going four hours, I came to a beautiful patch of long grass standing eighteen inches high in the bed of the Zenjan river, which we had been skirting for some time. I decided to stay here some hours in order to rest the horses, though there was no shade and the sun was very hot. I had my bed laid down under the bank of the stream, and got some shade till about 11 a.m., when I was obliged to get up.

At about a quarter to 1 p.m. even the horses seemed to think they had had enough of the splendid grass, and we started for Nikbé, which we reached at 6 p.m., the distance travelled being about twenty-six miles. This will give an idea of how slowly bad horses travel. These were quite the worst horses I have ever had to manage with as they required fifteen hours actual riding to cover twenty-six miles. I myself felt very tired, as it is far easier to ride good post-horses 100 miles at a stretch, as I have often done, than it is to ride such miserable animals as these only a quarter of that distance.

Nikbé is a poor village, and the houses were so dirty that I found it most difficult to find quarters. At last I obtained them in a house rather less dirty than the others, and stayed here over Sunday.

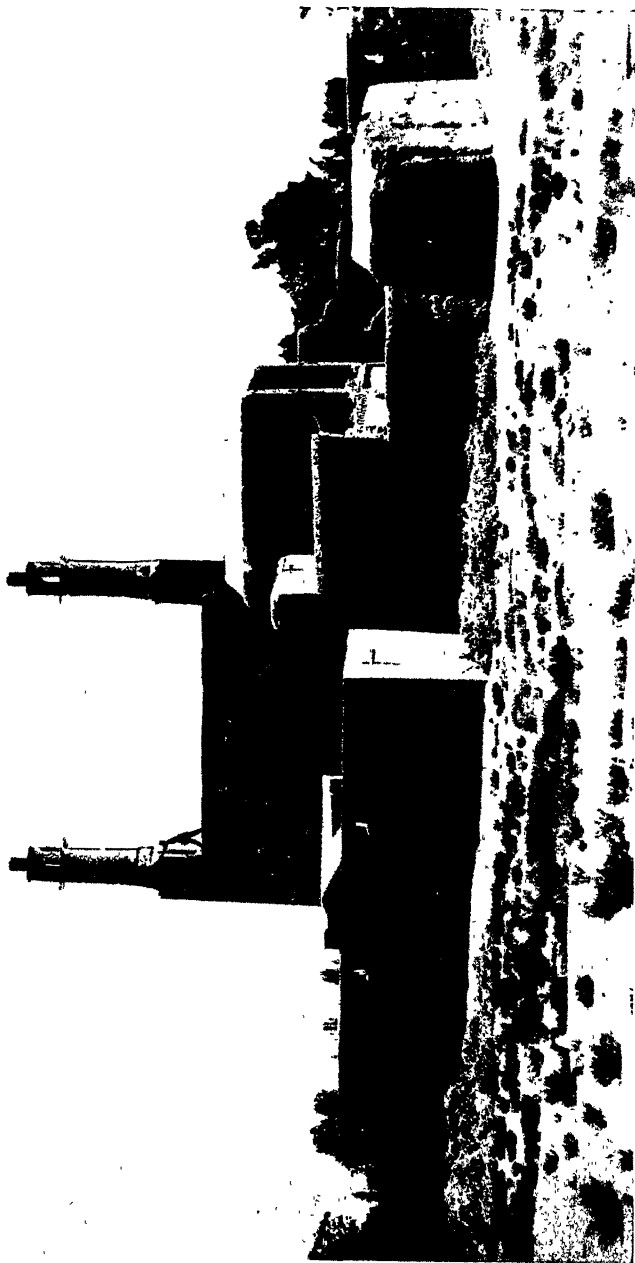
On Monday, 7th June, I started at three in the morning, and had a pleasant ride into Zenjan, a town of about 24,000 inhabitants, with a Governor and a European Telegraph Station. I found the clerk in charge was Mr Fabbray. I put up at the telegraph station, but took my meals at Mr Fabbray's own house. He was an Italian, and was married to an Armenian lady of Tabriz, and both he and his wife spoke French to me. While Mr Fabbray and I were talking about Mount Ararat, I mentioned that Mount Ararat in Armenia was not Noah's Ararat. Mr. Fabbray immediately answered, "The Bible says it is." I replied, "The Bible does *not* say so," and producing a pocket Bible read to him what it did say.\* Whereupon he said, "You English are extraordinary, you carry a Bible in your pocket, while I never read a Bible but once in my life, and then my father was angry with me."

Mr Fabbray was most kind, and arranged for post-horses onwards to Teheran, also purchasing a pack-saddle for my luggage. I got away about 10 a.m. on the 8th, and rode twenty-three miles to Sultana-bad. Here there is a fine mosque, built of brick, and with a blue-glazed dome. This mosque contains the tomb of Mahomed Khodabunda, the Slave of God, who was a man of many religions. He commenced life as a Mongol King of Persia, ruling from

\* "And the ark rested on the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat," (Gen. viii. 4.)

near Tabriz, under the name of Uljaitu Khan, and was a Buddhist, as were all the earlier Mongol Kings. Becoming a Christian, he was baptised under the name of Nicholas, but after a year or so he changed his mind, and turned Mahommedan, taking the name of Mahomed Khodabunda. When he became a Mahommedan, he built this mosque; here he called a meeting of all the chief ecclesiastics of the different Mahommedan sects to decide which one he himself would patronise, as he wished to belong to Mahomet's own sect. Among the Mahommedan ecclesiastics assembled was the leader of the Shiah sect, the one most prevalent in Persia. The leaders of each sect, as is usual, left their shoes at the door of the mosque, except the Shiah leader, who, though he took off his shoes, did not leave them outside, but carried them in under his arm. When they came before the king, he said to the Shiah leader, "Oh! learned man, why do you carry your shoes under your arm? It is most disrespectful so to approach a king." He said, "Excuse me, your Majesty, but I did this, because in the time of Mahomet the leader of such-and-such a sect, (pointing to one) stole my predecessor's shoes which were left at the door of the mosque. I therefore brought in my shoes, for fear his successor should also steal them." The man pointed at, jumped up very indignant, and said the Shiah leader was a horrid liar, and that his sect did not exist until 200 years after Mahomet. The Shiah leader then said, "I beg your pardon, it must have been the leader of that sect that did it," pointing to another who immediately also got angry, and replied, "How could that be? My sect did not arrive till 400 years after





A PERSIAN MOSQUE



Mahomet." Thereupon the Shiah leader pointed to still another, and said, "Then it must have been that one." The leader of that sect immediately answered, "We did not commence till 500 years after Mahomet," and so he went all round the sects, who all denied that they existed at the time of Mahomet. The Shiah leader then said, "That is my case, your Majesty, all these gentlemen have denied that any of their sects existed at the time of Mahomet, but I can assure you the Shiahs did, and that Mahomet himself was of our sect." The Shah Khodabunda therefore adopted the Shiah sect.\* It is a great pity that this beautiful mosque, like everything else in Persia, is going to ruin.

At Sultaneh there is a palace of the Shah. Though only built of mud, being plastered over with white cement and standing on high ground, it has a fine appearance. At Sultaneh in the post-house, I met General Schindler, the Inspector-General of the Persian Telegraphs, who begged me to stay with him, and go and see some gold-mines which he was about to visit. I readily agreed, as I am very interested in mines. He told me that a large piece of gold and quartz, said to weigh 104 lbs., of which nine-tenths were pure gold, had been found near the village of Kavend, about twenty miles from Zenjen, and he had been sent by the Shah to enquire into the matter and search for the gold.

\* This story is characteristically Oriental, and may be classed amongst those "detective" stories which are fairly numerous in the East. The Biblical story of Solomon and the two mothers is one of these, as is also the account in the Apocrypha of the young prophet Daniel's method of incriminating the two elders in the "Story of Susanna." Such methods for extorting confessions are in vogue at the present day.

[B. S.]

There was also said to be plenty of gold in the soil near the bridge, but it was reported that no gold mine had been discovered, and the Shah wished the matter to be cleared up. With all these interesting things to see, I determined to retrace my steps to Zenjan with him, and postpone my journey for a few days.

June 9th. We rode back to Zenjan, and went to the telegraph station, Mr Fabbray being very much astonished to see me again. Zenjan is celebrated as the place where the Babis, a religious sect, defended themselves most bravely against the Persian army during nine months. I visited the ruins of the house of the Chief of the Babis; the Persians have never allowed the construction of a house on this site. Wonderful tales are current of the Babis having invented a machine which enabled them to dig mines with incredible speed. In the bazaar I procured some silver coins of the Assascide Dynasty, and General Schindler also purchased some rare gold coins of the early Khalifs. We made extensive enquiries for faience, but none was procurable.

I stayed on the 10th June with General Schindler at Zenjan.

June 11th. We left Zenjan about two o'clock, and rode over the mountains twenty miles to Kavend through a pretty country.

Kavend is an uninteresting looking village, and has only become celebrated since the lump of gold was discovered here. General Schindler went out to view the country, and visited the spot where the lump of gold was supposed to have been found.

He also went to an old fort where people said pots containing gold and silver coins had been found long ago.

The following day, General Schindler commenced his gold-washing operations. He found some iron-stone rock containing minute particles of gold, which he had washed to test whether it was worth it. He had got four professional gold-washers from Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, where they search the heaps of ruins and occasionally find gold and silver coins, but I fail to understand why these men should be called 'gold-washers.' General Schindler picked up some fine specimens of iron ore, in some of which a few grains of gold were visible, but of quartz, which we wanted to find, he only discovered one small piece contained in some conglomerate. He thought that the lump of quartz containing gold, which was said to have been found, was only some quartz embedded in conglomerate. I believe a more simple solution of the problem is that neither gold nor quartz ever was found. Mr Dietz, a mining engineer, was to have joined us here, but was delayed by illness. We hoped he would come soon, as we were much in want of a professional engineer.

13th June. In the evening, I walked over to where General Schindler was carrying on his gold-washing operations. He was washing the iron soil taken from an old mine, which did contain a little visible gold. This mine had been re-discovered by Mr Dietz on his last visit here, and he was of the opinion that it had not been worked for iron, though the ore was rich in that metal, but that it had been

worked for gold, as he found stone troughs in which the iron ore had been pounded previous to washing. General Schindler kept the small amount of gold he had found in a slop basin. He had pits sunk in various places, and washed the soil in order to test its richness.

June 14th. I went for a long walk over the hills with General Schindler, prospecting for gold. We found plenty of loose quartz rock, but no reef which of course was what we wanted.

A man told us he had found some silver ore, so we asked to see it. He thereupon brought us a piece of mica, which he had mistaken for silver ore. I believe the people here, so far from helping General Schindler to find gold, were carefully trying to throw him off the scent.

After I had left Kavend, I received a letter from General Schindler, informing me that he had found a veritable old "man-of-the-mountains," who told him that the gold found about here had not come from Kavend, the village where we were, but from a mountain some way off, and that the people had been taking small quantities of gold from this mountain for quite a century. But since the Shah had taken up the matter they were trying to obliterate all signs of work. When I was at Kavend I saw the individual who was said to have found the lump of gold, but he pretended to be half silly, and we could get nothing out of him. When the Shah first heard that this man had found a lump of gold, he had him conveyed to Teheran, and promised him honours and a title if he would show him where it had been discovered. When the poor man either

could not, or would not tell—I myself believe he could not tell because he had never found anything—the Shah had him flogged, the roof of his house pulled off, and the floor dug up. A few small ingots of gold were found in the roof, which no doubt he had collected by washing the soil in the course of several years, and had cast into ingots. It became known that he then went on a pilgrimage to Mashad, and sold some of his ingots, thereupon the story of the lumps of gold was invented.

When General Schindler went back to Teheran after his search for gold, he took with him a small quantity of gold-dust, and on being sent for by the Shah, held the gold-dust out in his hand for his Majesty to see. The Shah, becoming quite angry, gave his hand a whack scattering the gold-dust over the ground, and said; “I expected you to bring me lumps of gold weighing a ‘batman’ ( $6\frac{1}{2}$  lbs.) each, and you bring me these miserable little scraps.” This shows how much gold-mining the Shah understands. General Schindler laughed when he told me this story. The result of the whole thing was that the poor man, who was said to have found the gold, has had his house pulled down, and been flogged. Thus it is always in Persia that, whenever anyone makes a discovery, he does not gain by it. I heard that a potter was found who had re-discovered the process of making the beautiful faience for which Persia was once celebrated, and which now fetches so high a price. Unfortunately the Shah heard of it, the man was sent for, and he found that he was expected to make this faience for the Shah and his courtiers gratis. Being a wise man,

he collected all the money he could, and bribed the prime minister to let him disappear out of the country.

15th June. I rode into Zenjan, and again put up at the telegraph office, where I was hospitably received by Mr Fabbray.

16th June. I got off at 8 A.M. and rode to Sultaneh, about twenty-three miles. I found there were no horses at the post-station, but that they were grazing a couple of miles off. I went and got the horses I required, and started for Heedej, the next post-station. Some three miles short of Heedej, I saw a tent where there were a lot of horses. I rode up to the tent; it proved to be the post-horses out grazing so I got my change. The post-station at Heedej was a new one, and much better than usual. The distance I had come to-day was only forty-two miles by the direct road, but having to go several miles out of the direct road for each change of horses made it much longer. I only got in about 8 P.M.

17th June. I woke my servant up at half past two o'clock to get some tea ready, and we got away at 4 A.M. After riding through a fairly fertile country for about nineteen miles, I reached the pretty village of Kirveh. It was quite surrounded by orchards, a charming sight in so treeless a land as Persia. I found the post-house shut up and deserted, and had to go about two miles off the road to a place where the post-horses were grazing. I waited about an hour for my servant and the post-boy to come up, and then got four good horses, and rode nineteen miles to Siahdehend. This is a large but poor village rather more dirty than usual, while







most of the houses were built with domed roofs of unburnt brick, which always gives a mean appearance to a place. I did not wait for my servant and the post-boy to come up, but started off at once by myself, and rode through a desert-looking country to Kasbin.

I arrived at Kasbin about four in the afternoon and went to the telegraph station, where I was hospitably received by Mr Avnatamow, the Georgian telegraph master, of the Indo-European line. I found he was a brother of the telegraph master at Meani with whom I had stayed. In the evening I went out with him and found an hotel which had been built by the Shah at the expense of 35,000 tomans (£13,000) for European travellers, but, as it had then no furniture and no servants in it, it was not used. An energetic Persian had established a service of small Russian waggons drawn by three horses (a "troika") between Kasbin and Teheran. I ordered and paid for my horses and wagons from here to Teheran and arranged to start at 10 A.M. the next day.

18th June. I started at 10 A.M. in a large springless wagon, drawn by four good horses, and driven by a Russian coachman, my luggage and servants accompanying me in the wagon. The road was very rough indeed, and as the coachman delighted in galloping his horses the whole way, I was almost shaken to pieces. There was no road whatever, merely on each side of the track a ditch had been dug, and the land between the two ditches left untouched, though the Shah had been charged an enormous sum for what was, by apology, called a

carriage road from Kasbin to Teheran. I had no conception that any shaking could be so bad. I had to set my teeth hard to prevent biting my tongue, and my eyeglass, which was hanging by a cord round my neck, was broken by the shaking. The only sort of attempt made to entitle this to be called a road was that some of the larger streams were bridged, while the smaller were left alone, except that the banks of them had been smoothed a little. Every three miles or so there was a police-station with three men in it, and a flag with "the lion and sun" flying over it. The whole amount spent on such a road must have been very little indeed, but I believe the sum charged for it to the Shah was 160,000 tomans (or £59,260) for the ninety-four miles. A good metal road could have been made the whole way for this sum, stone being plentiful alongside of it. I am informed the Shah is always charged for everything exactly three times over what it costs, but in this particular instance, I do not think even one-quarter of the sum charged had been expended on the road. Somebody must have had a grand picking.

At the end of sixteen miles we arrived at the post-horse station. Here there was fair accommodation for travellers, and the building reminded me of an Indian dak bungalow. I changed my large waggon with four horses for a small one, shaped like a canoe and drawn by three horses. I had, from this onward, a Russian Tartar from Kasan as my driver, and very well he drove. It is a curious thing that although Russians drive so well, they never ride, with the exception of Cossacks.

In the course of seven years that I spent in Russia, I only once met a man riding, and I was so astonished that I went up and spoke to him, and asked how it was he came to ride. He answered, "I am not a Russian, but a Tartar." My son and my secretary, who used to ride about the neighbourhood of Odessa were constantly met by the cry of "Tartar boys, Tartar boys." Of course in the town of Odessa a few gentlemen do ride, but they are generally foreigners, or Russians who have taken to riding when living abroad, or else are cavalry officers.

At the post-station the fleas were so bad that I had a sort of feeling that if they had all been of one mind they could have pulled me out of bed. Even my Persian servant (and Persians generally do not mind fleas) left the building saying he must sleep outside in the garden. I got up in the morning quite unrefreshed, having had very little sleep. I had a Persian coachman at this stage, which meant bad driving and constant stoppages to adjust the harness, while the horses were decidedly getting worse as Kasbin was left behind. The Russian superintendent of the post-line resided at Kasbin.

The next stage I had a Russian Tartar as coachman, which meant that he drove well and had his horses in good order. He was delighted to hear that I knew the Volga and Kasan, his native town, which I praised as a fine city.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE PERSIAN ARMY

KASBIN is the last Persian town in which Turkish is spoken by the natives. At Teheran, and onward, only Persian is heard. On arriving at Teheran I procured post-horses and went to Gulahek,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles off, where the British Minister and nearly all the English residents live in the summer. I drove to the house of Colonel Smith, the Director of the Indo-European Telegraph, my old friend. He had married since I last met him, and introduced me to his wife. They were most kind, and entertained me most hospitably. After I had had a swim in the legation swimming-bath, and a good night's rest, I felt a different person. I remained at Gulahek from the 19th of June to the 12th of July and constantly rode into Teheran to see all that was worth seeing. The city had altered considerably since my previous visit in 1866.

I visited the "Sadr-i-Azī" or Prime Minister, Mirza Hussein Khan, who was also the "Sipah Sala" or Commander-in-Chief. He spoke French well, and had been Persian Consul-General in Bombay and Persian Ambassador at Constantinople. He was

most agreeable, and full of conversation. The room in which he received me was a beautiful one, the walls inlaid in pretty patterns with small pieces of looking-glass, and a fountain playing in the middle of the room. A story I heard in Teheran, rather amused me. I was told that the Russian Minister in some way gave him offence. He retaliated by saying, "You Russians put on a tall hat and tight trousers, and consider yourselves Europeans, but you are not." I do not know if this was true. I also called upon the "Mokh-i-Dowlah," who is the Minister of Telegraphs and a member of the Council of State. He was celebrated in Persia, both among Europeans and natives, as a thoroughly honest and upright man, and one whose word was even better than other people's bonds. Persians declare that this scrupulous honesty was, in his case, a matter of policy, and that he found it paid to be honest. It is a pity that more people in Persia do not follow in his steps. I found him a very civil and polished gentleman, but these are qualities that are common in Persia. He sent one of his sons to be educated at Berlin, and this son had lately returned, after five years' schooling, a really well-educated man. Most Persians who go to Europe generally spend a few months in Paris or Vienna, sometimes in Paris and London, and pick up a little French, but acquire no knowledge worth having. According to the Arab proverb, "they leave their home a donkey and return a thorough jackass." This son of the Mokh-i-Dowlah had lately had a bad attack of diphtheria, which was very prevalent in Teheran, and his father was most anxious about him.

Diphtheria was then (*i.e.* 1880) quite a new disease in Teheran, and had only been known for the last three years.

I also called upon Sultan Murad Mirza, Hissam-i-Sultanat, an uncle of the King. His name was Sultan Murad, Mirza placed after a name meaning Prince, and his title Hissam-i-Sultanat (Sword of the State) was given him by the Shah after the capture of Herat. He was for many years Governor of Khorassan, the most turbulent province of Persia and particularly difficult to govern, as the constant raids of the Turkomans render almost any government impossible. He, in a great degree, suppressed the Turkoman raids besides capturing Herat from the Afghans. Herat had for ages been included in Persia, and was really as much a part of that country as Mashad itself. However, in the troubles which supervened on the death of Nadir Shah, Herat was lost to Persia, but was re-taken in 1856 by the Hissam-i-Sultanat. Great Britain, however, objected to Herat forming a part of the Shah's dominions, and declared war against Persia in 1856. After Bushire, Mahamarah, and other places in the Persian Gulf had been taken by Great Britain, Persia agreed by a Treaty signed in Paris on the 4th of March, 1857, to give up Herat to the Afghans, and to withdraw her troops.

At this time there was an Afghan Prince, a refugee, at the Persian Court named Sultan Ahmed Jan, to whom the Shah decided to make over Herat, on his agreeing to have the prayers in the mosque read in the name of the Shah, and not of the Afghan King. Sultan Ahmed Jan was so anxious to get possession



of Herat, that he started off from Teheran and reached Herat before any orders on the subject had been received from the Shah. He at once hurried to the quarters of Sultan Murad Mirza, the Hissam-i-Sultanat, who was then Governor of Herat, and demanded an audience. The Persian sentries, however, refused him admittance to the presence of the Governor, saying he was asleep, so Sultan Ahmed Jan drew a dagger and stabbed one of them. Sultan Murad Mirza on being informed that an Afghan had wounded one of his sentries and had tried to force himself into his presence, ordered him to be severely bastinadoed, and, as nothing was known of Sultan Ahmed Jan, the sentence was carried out. During the day, orders were received from the Shah to place Sultan Ahmed Jan on the throne of Herat, and withdraw the Persian troops, and in the course of a few days this ceremony was performed. These ups and downs in life, common in the East, would be startling in Europe; this instance, however, was a rather extreme case. I had known Sultan Murad Mirza fourteen years ago, when he was Governor of Shiraz, and the country of Fars (of which Shiraz is the capital) was in a very disturbed state, and violent measures had to be resorted to in order to render the roads safe. He buried a number of the most notorious robbers in holes in the ground around Shiraz. The victim was placed in the hole with his head left out, and a brick pillar built round him. The space between the bricks and the robber was then filled with dry plaster of Paris which, on being wetted, soon hardened, and at the end of a few hours the man was unable to breathe, the plaster

having settled round his lungs and prevented their action. Death soon supervened, and the body was left with the head exposed as a warning to his comrades. I need not add that, thanks to these drastic measures, highway robbery near Shiraz soon ceased.

I do not for a moment defend the action of the Hissam-i-Sultanat, but some means were necessary to restore order and render the road safe for travellers. It is a great pity that he is no longer ruler of Khorassan, as that province has not been well governed since he left it. He had lately been Governor of Kirmanshah on the frontier of Persia towards Bagdad, but he returned to Teheran last spring (1879), when Persia wished to reoccupy Herat, thinking that England might be persuaded to allow its occupation. He did not return to Kirmanshah but started on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

At present (*i.e.* 1880), the Persian army is being drilled by twelve Austrian officers, of whom there is one artillery and one engineer officer, the remainder being infantry officers. They were engaged for three years, and had some 3,000 men under their orders, who were to be drilled and disciplined by them to form a pattern on which the rest of the Persian army would be remodelled. The young Persian officers of this Austrian contingent struck me very favourably; they were the best Asiatic officers I had ever seen. The battalions actually paid and disciplined by the Austrians gave promise of becoming very good soldiers. In addition to the above troops, some 3,000 other soldiers are also drilled, but only on parade, by the Austrians, while they are paid and

disciplined by the Persians, but these do not promise well. All Asiatics break down on that point, as the men do not receive their pay, which is absorbed by their Persian officers. The Turki population of Persia would make very good soldiers, if paid by European officers. Two regiments of Persian Cossacks were being drilled and paid by Russian officers, and these troops will probably turn out well, but they are very weak, each regiment consisting, I think, of only about 400 men.

Captain Wagner of the Austrian artillery had taken much pains with the artillerymen, who were well drilled, and fine specimens of humanity, but they had no horses for the guns, nor any proper equipment. The Shah owns a number of horses for his own private use in his carriages, and they are sometimes lent to the artillery. There is not a single battery of artillery in Persia, field or horse, fit to take the field for one single day. On the day of a review, the Shah sends down his private carriage horses, and also those of some of his relatives, to the barracks, and about eighteen guns are horsed in some sort of fashion. As the horses are only sent on the very morning of the review, I need not say there is little chance of fitting the harness, etc., while the drivers know nothing of driving, though all Persians are good riders. Eighteen guns are somehow or other brought on to the field, but in such a fashion as would bring tears to the eyes of an English artillery officer; the whole business is far worse than a farce! Some friend of Persia should open the eyes of the Shah to the state of his artillery. At the time I was in Teheran, the Shah had eighteen

good Austrian guns. If these were properly horsed and equipped, they would be of real use, and might be formed into three efficient field batteries. Under present conditions the Shah has scattered about the country some 500 guns. These would probably, with two or three exceptions, be sold as old metal, and the Shah might be able, with the proceeds, to purchase a few good ones. I asked some of the Austrian officers what they thought would become of the small army they have taken so much pains to render fairly efficient, and they told me that they expected that, soon after their departure, all would return to the state of chaos in which they found them. About eleven years before the engagement of these Austrians, the Shah applied for twelve officers from the Indian army to drill his troops. As he did not offer to pay them, but expected the Indian Government to do so, his offer was refused. I myself think this was a mistake, as the pay of twelve English officers would not come to much, and the influence that England would have gained in Persia would have been considerable. The Austrian officers told me that they considered the Emperor of Austria made a mistake in allowing them to be paid by Persia, since their influence would have been much greater if they had been paid by their own Government, and that their position, in consequence, was very disagreeable. Russia once before offered officers, and I have no doubt would do so again.

Teheran has been much improved by the Shah since his return from Europe. The town has been enlarged, and a considerable extent of ground

enclosed within the walls. New fortifications have been raised round the town of a quasi-European character. I cannot say they are very efficient, but they amply suffice against any internal enemy. The defences of Persia consist in her desert, and the great waterless tracts which intersect her territory in almost every direction, and also in the high mountain ranges, easily defensible, which run across the country in parallel ridges. Even if Teheran was taken by some foreign enemy, it would do the Persians very little harm. In highly civilised countries with their centralised governments, the loss of the capital is always fatal, but Persia, though fairly civilised, is not at all in the position of a European country. Teheran is only the capital because the Shah and his court live there, but beyond this, there is no reason for its being so, and if the Shah was to move himself and the court to Ispahan, or any other large town in Persia, it would not cause any inconvenience to the country at large. The loss of the capital would not be felt by Persia, though it might have some effect abroad. Foreigners might think that the loss of the capital would be a serious thing for the country, while as a matter of fact, it would not, just as the loss of Pretoria during the South African war had little or no effect on the resisting power of the Boers.

While at Teheran I was present at a review by His Majesty of the two Persian Cossack regiments drilled by Russian officers. Each regiment consisted of about 200 men of all ranks, fairly well mounted for oriental cavalry. The men were in Cossack uniform, except that they wore the high lambskin

Persian hat. They went through a number of manœuvres of regular cavalry fairly well, but very slowly. After this, they performed equestrian feats before the Shah; men mounting and dismounting while at the gallop; picking up their hats from the ground as they passed at full speed. One man passed with his head on the saddle and his feet in the air; in fact, they were very inferior circus performers, but I could see that this part of the performance pleased the Shah much better than the drill, and I also think the men enjoyed it more. A great many of the men were far too young, mere boys, but as Persian soldiers are enlisted for life, they would soon improve in this respect. These regiments were to be increased to 400 men each.

The British legation during the summer lives at Gulahek,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Teheran. The houses built for the legation at Gulahek are small, but there is a magnificent drawing-room and dining-room tent pitched by a group of fine trees. There is a large reservoir or tank in the tent, and a stream of water constantly running through it. The effect at night when the tent is lighted up, the lights reflected in the water, is fairy-like. The British legation in the town is also a very fine building with beautiful gardens and splendid salons. Sir Ronald Thomson, the then English Minister, was a most hospitable and pleasant host, and did the honours of his mansion in a most kind way. I stayed with him during several of my visits to Teheran. In Persian houses of a superior class, the walls are covered with beautiful patterns worked into the wall with small pieces of looking-glass, which have a brilliant effect

when the rooms are lighted up. The walls are also distempered in bright colours. The roofs have stalactites made in plaster of Paris depending from them. The effect of all this is very superior to our wall paper, and I think that any London decorator who would import one of these Persian workmen, and decorate a few drawing-rooms in London, would receive a flood of orders.

Teheran is still called in some parts of Persia Rhé, Rhé or Rages having been a city in the neighbourhood of Teheran and of which Teheran is the modern representative. The ruins are situated about four miles from Teheran, near the holy shrine of Shah Abdul Azim. The golden dome of Shah Abdul Azim is one of the conspicuous sights viewed from many points near Teheran. It is a rich shrine, and much favoured by the Shah, and is visited every Friday by a large portion of the population of Teheran, especially by the women. A line of narrow gauge railway, about six miles long, has been constructed from Teheran to this place, and is the only railway in Persia. Rhé evidently was a city of great extent, large mounds attesting its ancient grandeur, while they are now burrowed into by the Jews of Teheran in the hopes of finding any small articles of value. I have a beautiful little porcelain cup of what is called *Reflét métallique*. It is supposed to be the same ware as that mentioned by Pliny under the name of Murian vases, and as coming from Caramania in Persia, now called Kerman. The secret of this metallic lustre given to pottery and porcelain has been lost, and it is supposed not to have been made in Persia during the last 600

years, though some was made by a Persian colony at Cordova in Spain during the Mahommedan rule there, and is very valuable. There are some beautiful examples of Persian reffét in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was sent from Persia by Sir Murdoch Smith. We have evidence of the existence of Rages in the time of Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, for in the 2nd Book of Tobit, in the Apocropha, it is mentioned that Tobit of the tribe of Napthali, who had been carried away captive from Galilee by Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, visited it. (Tobit 2 Bk., Ch. i. v. 14.) "And I went into Media and left in trust with Gabael the brother of Gabrios at Rajios, a city of Media, ten talents of silver."

A great range of mountains, rocky and barren, named Elburj, rises behind Teheran to a height of about 11,000 feet. In the distance is Demavend the pride and glory of Northern Persia, which can be seen from a very long distance. It rises to over 19,000 feet. In the hottest weather its cone of pure white snow, towering up, gives an idea of coolness and colossal grandeur. Demavend is the crater of an extinct volcano. The fires are perhaps only slumbering, for I was told that some parts near the summit are still warm to the touch. I was very anxious to make the ascent of Demavend, but I found it impossible to do this so early in the year as June. The ascent of this mountain is only practicable at the end of August or beginning of September, and I never happened to be in Teheran at that time of year. Demavend has often been ascended by Europeans, and the height carefully



ascertained. There is another very high mountain in Persia between Ispahan and Shiraz, about sixty miles from Yezdikasht, which has never been ascended, and which it would be well worth while for a traveller, having the time, to attempt. It is named Deenah, and is supposed to be only a little inferior to Demavend in height, and is certainly higher than Mont Blanc.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ACROSS THE DESERT TO KUM AND KASHAN

I LEFT Teheran for Ispahan on the 12th of July. My kind friends, Colonel and Mrs Smith, drove me from Gulahek to the town of Teheran, where I found three post-horses ready for me. One I mounted myself, the other my servant bestrode, and the third had a very large pair of saddle-bags on him, on the top of which the post-boy rode.

I left Teheran about 5 p.m. and rode twenty-seven miles to Kinar-a-Gird, where I lay down on the ground and had a little sleep. I then started again, and rode another twenty-seven miles to Hauz-i-Sultan. The country passed through between Kinar-a-Gird and Hauz-i-Sultan is desert. In fact for twenty miles from Teheran the country is more or less desert, and for three post-horse stations from Kinar-a-Gird until Kum is reached, a branch of the 'kavir' or great salt desert is crossed. This 'kavir,' which covers so many thousand square miles of Persia, is a very curious feature in the country. It is a depression in the land, and has evidently been the bed of an ancient sea; it is not all sand, but there are patches of clay and sand alternately.

There are ranges of bare, stony hills in parts of it, and there are also stony portions which are raised generally above the ordinary level. This curious feature of Persian scenery extends for hundreds and hundreds of miles. Its most north-western extension reaches the neighbourhood of Teheran, while to the south it stretches away through Persia to Baluchistan, and from Baluchistan to Sinde and the Indus. The whole of this desert is not called 'kavir,' which is the name given only to the Persian portion of it, but the desert of Baluchistan and Sinde is really a continuation of it. In some of the higher portions of the kavir where there are mountains, a few springs and rivulets are found, and in these oases there is a little cultivation, which enable one to traverse the kavir, but in many places it cannot be crossed, in consequence of the great extent of waterless country. Many of the rivers of Persia run into and are lost in this desert. In early spring, when the snows are melting on the mountains, patches of the kavir, near the mouths of these rivers, become great salt marshes, but the greater part of the year they are burning wastes. I have previously, in speaking of the lake of Urumiah, mentioned that when a river falls into a lake without an outlet the lake almost always becomes salt, because the river brings down the salt in solution and deposits it in the lake, and gradually, in the course of time, the water becomes very bitter. A similar thing has happened in the kavir, only the quantity of water brought down by the rivers has not been sufficient to form a lake, but only salt marshes in the spring, which dry up in summer. The few bushes of tamarisk, which are occasionally

found in the salt portion of this desert, are often of a bright emerald green, a curious effect caused by the salt. The Persians, who are very superstitious, call the country between Kinar-a-Gird and Hauz-i-Sultan the "Valley of the Angel of Death," and they say it is inhabited by a fiend who leads people astray from the road, and when they are lost and drop from fatigue, he tickles the soles of their feet until they die. This would indeed be a fiendish way of putting a man to death. But if anyone was to lose his way in the kavir, he would soon die of thirst without the assistance of any fiend.

Mahommedans have the most quaint ideas of history. Haman, chief minister or vizier to King Ahazuerus, is declared to have been the 'hussar' or prime minister of the king of Egypt; and still more curious, they confound Miriam, the sister of Moses, with the Virgin Mary, and declare that the Lord's Mother was Moses' sister. Another cause of dire confusion is that in Persian history the battles that were fought against the Romans near the Tigris have all been removed to the neighbourhood of the Oxus, and are declared to have been fought either against Mongols or Turks.

I left Hauz-i-Sultan about 5.30 p.m. when the sun was still very hot. After proceeding a few miles, a range of hills is crossed, bare, barren and wild, a landscape more worthy of the infernal regions. Near these hills I passed a man driving a pony, with a curious long load on one side, balanced by a bundle on the other. It was a human body, not even placed in a coffin, but just rolled up in a cloth and slung over the horse. No doubt it was the father or some

near relative of the driver of the pony, and he was, he supposed, reverently taking the body to be buried at Kum, where the remains of Fatmah, the sister of Imam Razah, are entombed. The smell as I passed the uncoffined body was dreadful, and I set spurs to my horse and galloped on. All over Persia one meets thousands of these bodies on the way to be buried at some sacred shrine. The favourite places for burial are Nujef in Arabia, where Ali is entombed, or Kerbela near Baghdad where his son Hussein was killed and is buried; or failing either of these, then Mashad in Khorasan where Imam Razah is entombed, or, if all these are too far, then at least at Kum, by the side of the Lady Fatmah, sister of Imam Razah. This common practice of the Persians of carrying their dead for hundreds of miles must cause the spread of many diseases. Fancy the effect of carrying the body of a man who had died of small-pox, typhus fever, or even plague, hundreds of miles to Kerbela! Sometimes one arrives at a caravanseri occupied by a caravan conveying hundreds of dead bodies. The *modus operandi* is to bury the body in its native place for about one year, then dig it up, roll it in a cloth, and convey it to Kerbela or elsewhere. Having to travel in company with a number of corpses makes a journey in Persia sometimes very unpleasant. The Turkish Government have forbidden the importation of corpses into Turkish Arabia, where the chief of these shrines is situated. But it is one thing for the Sultan to issue orders, and another to have them carried out. In the East there is a king called 'backsheesh' who is all powerful, and plenty of bodies are imported into Turkish Arabia.

I found the present stage, though it was only twenty-four miles, a very trying one, and was glad to get to the post-station at Pul-i-Dalak, or the Barber's Bridge, where, after eating some cold fowl which I had with me, I threw myself on a stone bench and slept till early morning.

Pul-i-Dalak consists of a caravanseri and post-horse station, and a long ruined bridge over the Hamadan river, which rises in the neighbourhood of the town of Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, where Queen Esther lived. This river is shallow at the present season, but in spring must carry a great volume of water. The water is very brackish, and a crust of salt is left in some places in the bed of the stream. However, the water is drunk by everybody and is not thought bad, in spite of its being bitter.

14th July. I started about 5.30 a.m., and had a pleasant ride of about fifteen miles through the desert to Kum. The approach from the desert is rather striking. The gilded dome of the shrine of the Lady Fatmah, and the many turquoise-coloured domes of the tombs of lesser saints, set against a sky of the brightest blue, and aided by a little green from trees, produce a fine effect, which, after traversing a desert for the past seventy-five miles, cheers the spirits of the traveller. I rode up to the telegraph office, and met with a kind welcome from the telegraph master, Mr Jeffries, who was in charge of the station.

Kum is about ninety-five miles from Teheran, and, according to Mahommedan ideas, is a most holy city. Almost all Mahommedans are divided into two great sects, named Sunnis and Shiahs.

I will, while at Kum, give a brief *resumé* of Mahommedan history since the death of Mahomet, which, though short, will enable the reader to follow the great divisions of the Mahommedan world.

Mahomet had no son to succeed him; he left an only daughter, Fatmah, not the lady buried at Kum, but an ancestress of hers. This Fatmah was married to Ali, a nephew and adopted son of Mahomet. At Mahomet's death, the natural idea was that his adopted son should succeed him as Khalif or Bishop, but Ali was at this time a young man, and had many enemies, one especially in the person of Ayesha, the favourite wife of Mahomet, whom he had much offended by bringing to light some indiscretions in her conduct. Ali, therefore, was not chosen as the Khalif or successor of Mahomet, but an uncle of Mahomet's, Abu Bekir by name, was selected instead, and was succeeded by Omar and Osman to the exclusion of Ali. This caused a schism amongst Mohammedans, and they became divided into the two great sects of Sunnis and Shiahs, the former considering Abu Bekir, Omar, and Osman as the legitimate successors of Mahomet, and only allowing Ali a place as the fourth Khalif after them; while the Shiahs declared the first three Khalifs to be usurpers. A favourite Persian habit is to curse Omar, whom they hate more bitterly than the two other usurpers. Though Ali did eventually succeed as fourth Khalif, he was murdered in a mosque at Kufa, yet his sons, Hussein and Hussan, did not follow him in the Khalifate, as Hussan was poisoned at Medina, and Hussein was killed in battle under circumstances of some

atrocities at Kerbela, near Baghdad. The Persians have taken the part of the family of Ali most violently, and almost worship him. In fact, there is a sect in Persia called Ali Illahys, who declare that Ali was God Incarnate. Ali and his successors are known as the twelve Imams. The Lady Fatmah buried at Kum is the sister of the eighth Imam, Ali-el-Razah, and died here while on her way to Mashad. Several of the Persian kings are buried at Kum, no Christians or Jews are allowed to live in the town, and all dogs entering it are at once killed. It would be a great blessing if this was done everywhere in Persia, as the stray ownerless dogs swarming in the Persian towns are a great nuisance. In the town are many 'Zealators' or Priests, whose business it is to look after the morals and religion of their neighbours. I heard of a young Persian connected with the telegraph department, who had arrived from Teheran with curled locks according to the Teheran fashion, being arrested by the Zealators and having his hair cropped. Music is also prohibited in Kum.

Kum is celebrated for very pretty turquoise blue salt-cellars which are made there. On the spot they cost only about a halfpenny each; I heard of an Englishman who sent a dozen to London when they were first made, and had them sold in a public auction-room for £1 1s. a pair, but I need hardly say the price very soon fell to about the same as at Kum.

I left Kum at six in the evening, and went to a place named Shorab or Salt Water, where the water was very bad indeed. Here there was a fine caravan-



seri, outside of which I slept for a few hours. This caravanseri was the scene of a very tragic event a few years ago. A sergeant of English engineers, who was acting as Inspector of the Indo-European Telegraph, went raving mad, and fired on the people without any provocation. He severely wounded one man, imagining in his madness he was being attacked. The natives present, thereupon, in self-defence, fired on the sergeant and shot him.

I only slept in this caravanseri for two and a half hours, and then rode on towards the town of Kashan. The whole road runs through a barren country with only small plots of cultivation, until the neighbourhood of Kashan is reached. The heat was very great indeed, and as I did not arrive at Kashan until 11 a.m. I felt it severely. The distance from Kum is only 67 miles, but I got very bad post-horses on the road, as I was following the postman, and got the tired horses left by him at each stage. I also lost my revolver, the sewing of the strap which held it having given way, and as I did not miss it for some time, I had to ride back about one and a half miles to recover it. Fortunately it was so very hot that there were few travellers on the road. I met an old man driving a white donkey, who I thought must have picked it up, and offered him a reward of ten francs if he had found it. As he denied that he had seen it at all, I told my servant to search the donkey's load, as I strongly suspected the man had it. Before my servant could search the load, the old man produced the revolver which he had hidden in a bundle of chaff he was carrying for his donkey's provender. I gave him

the ten francs, though I do not think he deserved it, but as I had said to him, "If you will give me the revolver, I will give you ten francs," and I think it always better to keep one's word to the very letter, especially in an Eastern country. All this considerably delayed my arrival at Kashan.

Kashan is a large town, said to have been built by the wife of the Khalif Haroun-ur-Rashid, and is partly in ruins, though it is the seat of a great many manufactories. A good sort of washing silk is made here, also silk velvet, but the latter does not meet the taste of Europeans. Pretty brass work is also made. Kashan is famous, however, for its beautiful faience and porcelain, known in Persia as 'kashi,' from the name of the town where it was formerly made. I tried to purchase some of this and did manage to get some of the commoner sorts, which I sent to England, but the better qualities known as 'réflét métallique' were not to be procured any longer. It is said that no good examples of this ware have been made in Persia for over 600 years, and it is thought that this 'réflét métallique' was known in Persia 1000 years ago, as it was mentioned by Pliny and others.

A few days before my arrival in Kashan, a friend of mine had passed through and carried off the last specimen. It was a small vase such as a schoolboy would call a good big jampot, and my friend considered it a great prize, and was delighted to give £20 for it. Another sort of white porcelain was formerly made approaching Chinese porcelain in appearance. This kind never has any figures on it. Then there is a good faience covered with a fine

glaze and decorated with figures in blue. The drawings are done with much spirit, and are often facetious in their character, and the 'verve' shown in many of them is wonderful. This ware is still procurable in considerable quantity, but generally somewhat broken, as the best is about 250 years old. I have some exceptionally good examples, but none has been made since the Afghan invasion, more than 180 years ago, when the Afghans swept over Persia like a cyclone, uprooting and destroying everything. The soft kind is what is known as 'celædon,' and is still procurable, thanks to its massive character which has preserved it better, but it is expensive, and in Europe, when in good condition, fetches a high price.

I was most kindly received at the telegraph office by Mr Stainton, who was in charge. In the evening he accompanied me to the bazaar, where I bought a quantity of faience, and the prices were decidedly high. I was fortunate in purchasing a fine large bowl of good faience of an old pattern from a woman who was not a dealer. Mr Stainton was so kind in helping me in my purchases, and the bowl was really a very valuable one. In one of the mosques there are some fine specimens of 'reflet métallique' tiles for which a dealer once offered 1,000 tomans, about £400, but his offer was refused. Shortly afterwards an attempt was made by burglars to dig these bricks out of the wall, I am glad to say unsuccessfully, since when a light has always been kept burning in the mosque at night.

After leaving Kashan, at two miles from that place, I passed the village of Foh where there is

a palace and beautiful gardens with running water. This palace is celebrated as the scene of a tragic event in Persian history. A former King of Persia, Nasr Ud Din Shah, when he ascended the throne in October 1848, found affairs in great confusion. The late prime minister, Hadji Mirza Aghassi, a curious compound of shrewdness and buffoonery, let everything manage itself. The previous ruler, Mahomed Shah, venerated him as a prophet, and he obtained extraordinary ascendancy over the king, whose tutor he had been. One of the first acts of Nasr Ud Din Shah on ascending the throne was to appoint a new prime minister, and he nominated Mirza Tekhi Khan, who, however, refused the usual title of Sadr Azim, and took that of Amir-i-Nizam, which is a lower title; he did this with the idea of averting ill-luck. Never has Persia had such a prime minister as Amir-i-Nizam Tekhi Khan, is the verdict of all Europeans who had known him. He ruled with a rod of iron, but was strictly just, he was the soldiers' friend, and saw that they received their food and pay regularly. Such a thing had never been heard of in Persia before, for though the pay was regularly drawn from the treasury, it had never reached the hands of the soldiers. Robbery and bribery were also put down with a high hand, but this was the point at which the Persian official rebelled, as he would not have his right to be bribed interfered with. Everyone in the country, from the governors of provinces to the deputy tax-gatherer's clerk, was against him to a man, and his downfall was certain. Another abuse he also tried to stop was the swarm of useless retainers and hangers-on

which accompanies the smallest official, who, receiving no pay, must plunder to live. Fancy if every Secretary of State in England was accompanied by hundreds of unpaid officials, and the lowest Government clerk by tens of such who had to live on the country, what the result would be! Nasr-ud-Din-Shah was only sixteen years old when he succeeded his father, and he did his best in appointing such a Prime Minister. But Mirza Tekhi Khan, though able and honest, had certain qualities which, in a despotic country like Persia, would ensure his downfall. He was very proud, very unyielding, even to the Shah his master, whom he treated as a severe tutor might treat a pupil. In Persia, when a man cannot be bribed, the money that he might have accepted, is fairly certain to be used against him in bribing somebody else to supplant him. The young Shah, however, through good and evil report, supported his Minister, and gave him his only full sister in marriage, a lady who, by her conduct under very trying circumstances has cast a halo round the Kajar dynasty.

The Shah determined to visit Ispahan, and when he entered that town, he was preceded by his Minister on horseback. A spectator in the crowd asked, "Who is the young man following the Prime Minister?" The answer was, "The Prime Minister's brother-in-law."

I think it is very doubtful if such an occurrence really took place, but it was reported to his Majesty, and the circumstance rankled in the Shah's mind. The Prime Minister, however, still retained his position, and returned with the Shah to Teheran,

but he felt he had many enemies, and that they were increasing in power. Mirza Tekhi Khan, however, abating none of his pride, still treated the king as if he were his pupil, and continued to press his reforms with undiminished vigour. But his enemies were getting too strong for him. The step he now took was the most fatal one he could have made, and alienated the Shah more from him than anything he could possibly have done. He applied for protection to the Russian Minister, who sent his own Cossack guard to the Prime Minister's house. This act was the one thing needful to turn the Shah completely against his Prime Minister. No European king would for a moment have allowed such a breach of international law, and it sealed the fate of Amir-i-Nizam. The Shah wrote to Prince Dolgorouki, the Russian Minister, desiring that the Cossack guard should be at once withdrawn, and this was done. The Shah was naturally very angry at what had taken place; the Prime Minister was disgraced, and sent to reside at a palace belonging to the Shah near Kashan. Now was shown the love and devotion of the Princess, his wife. Though she was only a girl of about sixteen, she went with her husband accompanied by her two little daughters, knowing that her presence was likely to be a help in preserving his life. She never let him leave the women's apartments, and watched him with a most wifely devotion, tasting all food before it was set before him, fearing that it might be poisoned.

Two months were passed in safety, but Prince

Dolgorouki, who seems to have been the evil genius of Mirza Tekhi Khan, boasted in Teheran that he had referred the question to St Petersburg, and shortly expected an answer. This annoyed the Shah, and the enemies of the Prime Minister worked upon him, so that he issued an order for the execution of Mirza Tekhi Khan. The Shah, after giving this order to the Farash Bashi, sent after him rescinding the order and telling him to return, but he either would not come back, or else did not receive the counter-order, but sped with all haste to Kashan, and gave out that he had been entrusted by the Shah with a dress of honour for Mirza Tekhi Khan, who thereupon proceeded to the bath, as is the custom before putting on a dress of honour. He had no sooner entered the bath than he was told that he must die, and he was given his choice of the mode of death. He chose to have his veins opened, and be bled to death. He met his end with much fortitude. His long absence alarmed the Princess, who found him shut in in the women's apartments. She broke open the door and went in search of her husband whom she found dead, and she mourned him like a true wife. Lady Shiel, the wife of the English Minister in Persia at the time, struck with the nobleness of the Princess's conduct, visited her on her return to Teheran, and has given a fine description of her in her book on Persia. The Shah, after the death of his Minister, bitterly repented of it, and grieved much for him. The Shah's mother had disliked Mirza Tekhi Khan, and used all her influence, which was great, against him. His death was an irreparable loss to Persia,

the country he loved so much and served so well during the three years he was Prime Minister. The Shah tried to make what reparation he could, and betrothed the two little daughters of Mirza Tekhi Khan to two of his own sons.



## CHAPTER IX

### ISPAHAN

I LEFT Kashan at 5 a.m. on the 16th July. The road from Kashan leads through a hot, stony plain, and after a few miles ascends a range of hills. Just at the entrance of the hills there is a fine caravanserai built by Shah Abbas the Great. This caravanserai, though in good repair, is not used at present. The road after entering the hills is bad and steep. After some miles a large reservoir, built by Shah Abbas, is reached. A deep ravine has been dammed up to a great height with a gigantic wall, thus forming the reservoir. Deep cuts run up towards the mountains, which collect and bring down the melting snow and rain into the reservoir where the water is stored for the dry summer season. It is from this source that a good deal of the water for the Kashan plain is procured. It was works like this that caused Shah Abbas to be called "The Great." The road from the reservoir winds about, and eventually a long and narrow, but very fertile valley is reached. After traversing this valley, which is one continuous orchard full of every variety of delicious fruit, apricots and peaches, nuts and almonds, apples,

pears, cherries, grapes, and walnuts, I reached the post-station of Kohrud, twenty-seven miles from Kashan. The climate here in winter is frightfully severe. It is said that it was in this valley that King Darius was killed by his two Satraps, Bessus and Nabarzanes, after his defeat by Alexander the Great. The Persian historian, Firdosi, agrees with the Greek historians as to the murder of Darius by the two Satraps, but he gives them different names. I spent three hours very pleasantly in this beautiful valley which I enjoyed after the great heat of Kashan. I then rode on through a mountainous country. Soon after leaving the post-house the crest of the range of mountains is reached, and the road descends for many miles through a country much more fertile than on the other side of the mountains, to the village of Soh, where there is a fine telegraph station of the Indo-European Company. Sergeant McGowan of the Royal Engineers, a superintendent of the line, also lived here, and I was very kindly received by him, and slept at Soh that night until 3 a.m., when I started for Ispahan.

The post-house at Bideshk is about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Soh. I had been accompanied on my journey the previous day by a very gentlemanly Persian, who was a "Daudi" or follower of the prophet David, though nothing to do with the David of the Bible. This sect is one of those calling themselves Ahl-i-Hak or the People of Truth; there are several divisions of them, some called Ibrahimys, some Daudis, and some Mirys, and others. The Daudis are perhaps the most numerous, or at all events they are the sect I heard most about at Ispahan. The

religion held by these people approaches very nearly the ancient Buddhism preached by Sakia Muni, but it is quite different from the Buddhism at present found in Burmah and Ceylon.

Polygamy and divorce are both forbidden to the People of Truth, who have undergone much persecution from the Mahommedans, and are much more civil to Christians than to Mahommedans. The Daudis say that their 'Pir' or Saint was an iron-smith, and lived in a cave near Karind on the borders of Persia and Turkish Arabia. A large number of them now reside at Sahna near Kirman-shah. They mix up in some extraordinary way their 'Pir' or Saint with the Psalmist David and make them out to have been one person. It is very difficult to get any authentic information about him.

I left Bideskh with the first light in the morning and rode twenty-four miles to Murchakar through an uninteresting country. Murchakar was a large village with plenty of water and good cultivation. Here I got a good horse, as also did my postboy, and we soon reached Gez and from there I rode to Ispahan, and after getting another good horse I proceeded to the Christian village of Julfa, where I was most kindly received by Dr and Mrs Bruce of the C.M.S., with whom I passed nearly two months very happily, improving myself in Persian. A feature of the country about Ispahan is the great number of pigeon towers of enormous size.

Ispahan, and especially the village of Gez, is celebrated all over Persia for its melons, which are not equalled by those of any other place, and are

exported to all parts of the country. The good quality of these melons is supposed to be caused by their being manured with pigeons' dung which fetches a good price. During the famine, which occurred three or four years ago, most of the pigeons were eaten, but the towers are now again inhabited by pigeons in considerable numbers. These pigeons have for many years been a great cause of quarrel between the villagers. In former times Ispahan was infested by professional pigeon stealers. These men trained their pigeons to join other flocks and lure them away. The thieves also placed some enticing food in their towers, so that many persons found their particular towers suddenly deserted, and great fights took place in consequence.

The suburb of Ispahan known as Julfa has a curious history. It is inhabited almost entirely by Armenian Christians, and was founded by a very enlightened king, Shah Abbas the Great. Finding his Persian subjects were not given to trade, he compelled a large portion of the inhabitants of Erivan, Nachivan, and Julfa, situated on the Araxes, to settle near Ispahan. The main body of these Armenian Christians was settled in the new town which he built and named Julfa, after the town on the Araxes. Shah Abbas had also another object in view. He wished to depopulate the country on the borders of his kingdom towards the Osmanli Turks, as Turkish armies constantly invaded his dominions, and he did not wish them to find a well-peopled and fertile country on the borders of his kingdom, preferring that the Armenian population, who were his most industrious and

peaceful subjects, should be near his own capital. The Armenians, though keen traders and industrious peasants, are an unwarlike race, and little suited to border warfare. Many were also settled by him in the mountainous country between Ispahan and Hamadan, amongst the Buktaris, the climate of these mountains being well suited to the Armenians, as it is a very cold country. A part of Julfa was also settled by Shah Abbas II with Guebres, known to Englishmen as Fire Worshipers, and to Europeans in India as Parsees. These people were brought from Karman or Yezd, but there are no Guebres now residing in Julfa, having mostly gone to India, while a few have become Mahommedans. During the summer a few Guebres do come from Yezd to Ispahan for the cultivation of poppies for opium.

The modern town of Julfa consists of eight parishes, each having its own church, and one of the parishes has two churches. Besides these there is the Cathedral with the Monastery of the Order of St Basil. This Monastery is at present only inhabited by the Archbishop himself and one monk. The bishops and archbishops, as in the Greek Church, are always monks, and celibate. They all belong to the order of St Basil. Parish priests are allowed to marry, but not the monks. The present Archbishop (*i.e.* in 1880) is a native of Bulgaria, named Gregory, and cannot speak Persian. He is also Metropolitan of the Armenian Church in India, where he has resided for a considerable time. The Armenians at Julfa, like Armenians everywhere, look to Etchmiadzin in Russia as their head-quarters, and their Patriarch or 'Catolicos'

lives there, and is elected by the Armenian Bishops of all lands, but the choice is subject to the approval of the Emperor of Russia. They also have a 'Catolicos' or Patriarch at Constantinople, who is elected in the same way as the Patriarch at Etchmiadzin, but his election is subject to the approval of the Sultan of Constantinople. In reality he has more power than the Patriarch at Etchmiadzin, though nominally he is subject to him. The Armenians claim to be descended from Japhet and say that Haik, the great-grandson of Japhet, was their first king, whence they call themselves 'Haik,' but everyone else calls them Armenians. Some of the Armenians are said to have been converted to Christianity in very early times by Thaddeus who was sent to them by the Apostle Thomas, but they were heathens, as a body, till A.D. 325, when they were converted by St Gregory the Illuminator, who established himself as their Bishop at Etchmiadzin in that year. The persecutions he went through at the hands of Tiridates, then King of Armenia, are a favourite subject for pictures in Armenian churches. In the Cathedral at Julfa there are pictures showing the fourteen tortures he endured; such as having his head crushed, boiling oil being poured into him, marched about with spikes driven through his feet, and being put down a well where, it is said, he was kept for fourteen years, at the end of which time, Tiridates for his wickedness was transformed into a pig. This scene is very vividly rendered in the Cathedral picture, where the king, in the form of a pig with a golden crown on his head, has come

to beg the saint's intercession, which the saint granted, whereupon the king, restored to human form, treated the saint with all due reverence and respect. Saint Gregory did one very unwise act by his destruction of the whole of the ancient Armenian literature, which is reported to have been very copious, and it might have thrown some light upon ancient Persian history, which is said to be sadly wanted. In this matter, he and the Khalif Omar, who ordered the destruction of the celebrated library of Alexandria, seem to have been on a par; in fact in one respect, he seems to have done worse than the Khalif Omar, for Omar when he destroyed all the others, did supply the people of Egypt with one book, the Khoran, which at all events he considered contained all knowledge that was necessary for mankind, but it does not transpire that St Gregory supplied the Armenians with the Bible. No doubt the destruction of all ancient records was accomplished with the idea of winning the people from their ancient faith, but they seem also to have lost with their literature the knowledge of their ancient written character, so much so that their Patriarch Mesrob, a hundred years after St Gregory, had to invent a written character when he gave them a translation of the Bible into Armenian, in A.D. 411. This great and wise gift by their Patriarch of the Scriptures in their own tongue was probably the means of preserving Christianity to the Armenians through the persecution which they have for ages endured. There was a numerous Christian church in Persia also at this period with many bishops, but the Persians

never had the Bible in their own tongue, and Christianity was stamped out in Persia, firstly by Zoroastrianism, and much later by Mahommedanism. The kings of Persia, who were Zoroastrians, tried to stamp out Christianity in Armenia, but in spite of most inhuman tortures, were unsuccessful. The Armenians at Julfa are at present not oppressed; the Governor of Ispahan, Zil-es-Sultan, or Shadow of the King, being a tolerant Prince, does not permit it. They often go to Calcutta or Batavia, and when they have made a little money return home and settle at Julfa. Those, however, who become very rich do not return, but send their children to be educated either in Holland or in England, and after a generation or two, they become either Englishmen or Dutchmen.

The Cathedral at Julfa is rather a fine building, but nothing can be seen of it from the outside, except the dome, as it is surrounded by a high wall close up to the building. There was a picture in the Cathedral illustrating the parable of the man with the beam in his eye, picking the mote out of his friend's eye. This was really very good. The pharisaical look of the man with the beam in his eye, and the humility of the little fellow with the mote in his, were very well shown. The beam was about the size of a mast of a ship, while the mote was very small indeed. I had it copied by an Armenian artist, and brought it to London, where it has proved to be a source of much amusement to my friends.

Armenians do not permit images in their churches, but only pictures, such being considered heretical by both the Armenian and Greek churches. There are,





"THOU HYPOCRITE, FIRST CAST OUT THE BEAM OUT OF THINE OWN EYE;  
AND THEN SHALT THOU SEE CLEARLY TO CAST OUT THE MOTE OUT OF THY  
BROTHER'S EYE." (S. Matt , Ch. 7, V. 5)

*Face page 252*



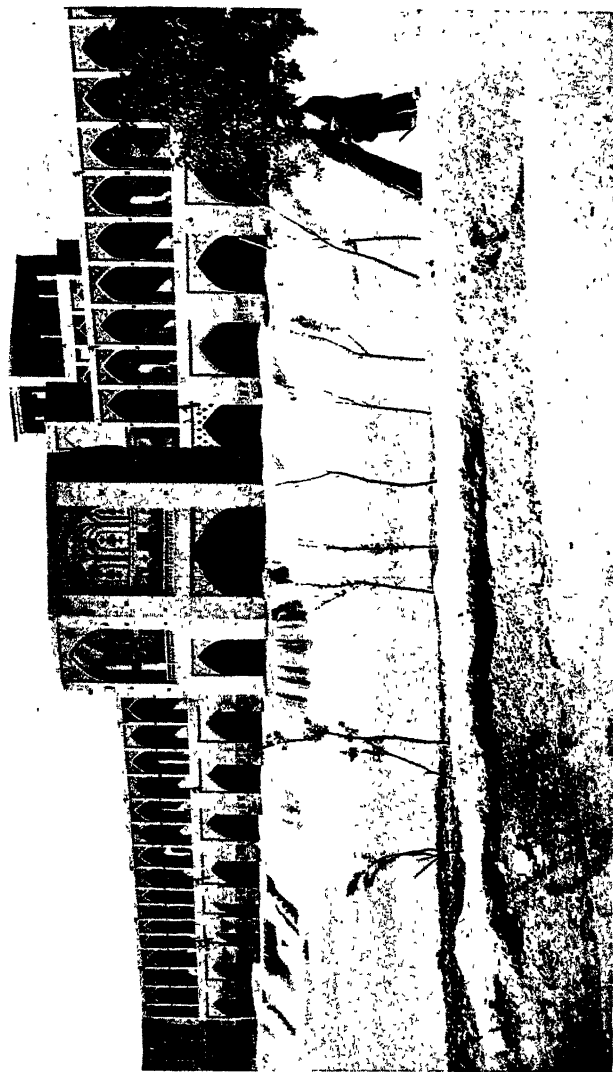
however, both Catholic and Protestant Armenians in Julfa. The Protestants attend the service performed by Dr Bruce, a missionary of the English Church Missionary Society, who has done a great work in Julfa, having a Protestant congregation of about 150 Armenians, besides giving a good education to about 250 boys and girls, the boys going straight from there in many cases to the University of Calcutta. He has also been successful, in some instances, among the Mahommedans.

I have never visited a mission where such happy progress has been made in a few years ; especially has the status of the Armenians been very much raised in this part of Persia, as, previous to Dr Bruce's arrival, they had been in a very degraded condition.

I rode out to see two curious minarets belonging to the tomb of a Mahommedan saint, situated in the village of Garladan. They are not very lofty, but they have a very curious property, namely that they can be shaken and rocked to and fro by the exertions of a man placed inside them. They are built of red brick and look very ordinary minarets, but they shake about and quiver quite as much as trees in a storm. The roof of the tomb is formed by a flattened cupola, and the two minarets are at the two front corners. The whole roof trembles and shakes from the effects of the rocking of the minarets. They have been in existence for a very long time, but fell into ruin, and have been rebuilt within the last few years. The amount of rocking seems to be greater in the new minarets than it was in the old ones, as

I have read an account of the rocking of the old minarets by a former traveller, and I was not at all prepared from his description for the amount of oscillation I saw and felt. Near this village, on the top of a very steep mass of rock, which rises suddenly from the plain, there is a Zoroastrian Fire Temple which I also visited. The view around from the top of this rocky hill is magnificent, and it is in such spots that the Zoroastrians built their Fire Temples. The temple was a small, unpretentious building of sunburnt brick, open on all four sides, with a domed roof which had fallen in. Many Europeans have, unfortunately, cut their names on the walls, and so disfigured them. There is another Fire Temple of similar modest material on the top of a high hill near Julfa.

I paid many visits to the town of Ispahan, once a magnificent town built by a master-mind, but now it is mostly ruined and only contains about 90,000 inhabitants. During the reign of Shah Abbas the Great, who was a contemporary of the English Queen Elizabeth, it is said to have contained from 600,000 to 1,000,000 inhabitants. On one side it is bounded by a river, the Zinderud, which is crossed by five bridges; two of these bridges would be an ornament to any capital in the world. These two, which cross the river in a central position, lead up to two fine streets. Both of these streets are called Char Bagh, and are lined with a double row of magnificent plane trees, which in Persia attain a stupendous size. There is first a wide central road lined by trees, then a wide bed on each side for flowers, and then two narrow roads. All



BRIDGE AT ISPAHAN



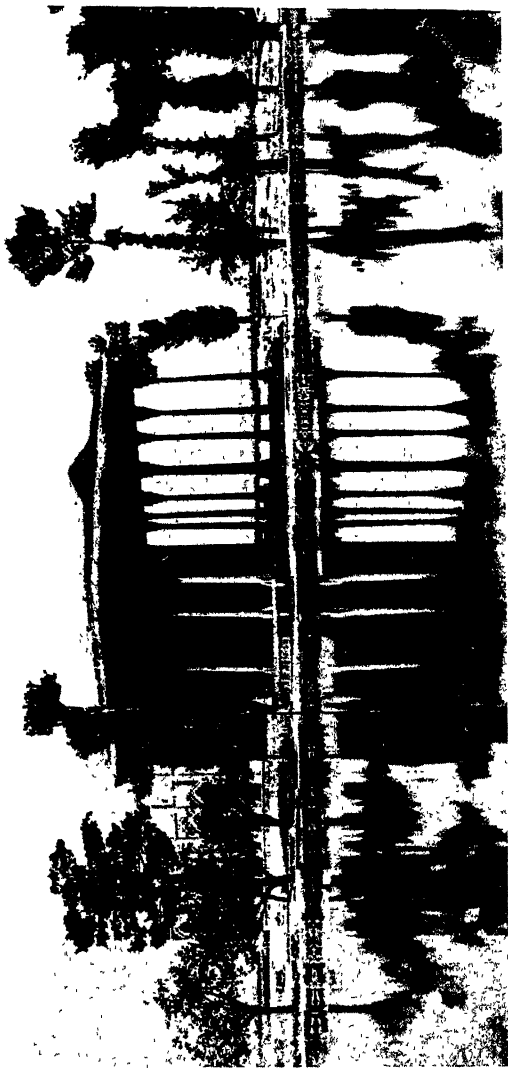
these roads are paved, and there are stone-lined canals in the middle for bringing water to the flower beds, and for watering the roads. At short intervals there are large reservoirs and basins containing water. On each side are the ruins of palaces. Going up the chief Char Bagh, the one nearest to Julfa, one comes to a splendid college for instruction in Mahommedan learning, called Medresseh-i-Madar-i-Shah, the College of the Mother of the King. It was built by the mother of one of the kings of the Sufi Dynasty, but which I could not discover. It was certainly the finest thing of its kind I had ever seen. The very massive entrance door was covered with heavy plates of solid silver, which were so thick that they were carved with arabesques, sometimes from the Khoran, and in the most beautiful writing. I was surprised that, when the Afghans plundered Ispahan and massacred most of the inhabitants, they left this beautiful door intact. In one or two places some sacrilegious hand has torn off some projecting pieces of the silver, which had been replaced by tin, but generally the massiveness of the silver has been its protection. Inside was a fine entrance gateway, where food, coffee, and pipes were sold for the use of the scholars. The gateway passed, a square garden was reached, surrounded on three sides with rooms for the scholars and doctors of law. On the fourth side stood a noble mosque with two of the tallest minarets almost I have ever seen. The dome of the mosque and the front of the minarets were of the most beautiful faience in resplendent colours, turquoise blue predominating, with a white pattern

of flowers running over the dome. The outer walls of the doctors' quarters were faced with handsome marble; the whole was a gem, such as is seldom seen, a monument of pious devotion and reckless expenditure. It was in very good order, with the exception of some tiles in the dome. A few scholars and two or three teachers still inhabit the college, but its endowments have disappeared. The royal lady who built it used to attend with her numerous waiting-women once every week to take away the dirty clothes of the learned doctors and to have them washed in the royal laundry, considering it an honour to wait on the learned. But such things are no more!

In spite of their tyranny, the Sufi kings, by their love of learning and the encouragement they gave to art, must take a high place among Eastern sovereigns. Shah Abbas the Great and his successors made Ispahan the wonder of the world, and at that time no city could compare with it. Think of what London or Paris must have been at the time of Elizabeth, and then look at what even now remains of the Char Bagh and Ispahan.

Proceeding up the Char Bagh, which is very long and about a hundred paces wide, on the right we enter by a doorway into a garden of fine plane trees, but utterly neglected, and see the remains of ruined palaces. In the gardens are two buildings, one called the Inah Khana or Looking-glass House; this was much spoilt. A little further on is a fine building named the Chail Situn, or Forty Columns. This is still in fairly good repair, and gives one some idea of the splendour that surrounded Shah Abbas.





HALL OF THE FORTY PILLARS, ISPAHAN



This hall was used by him to receive Ambassadors and other personages of State. At the back are rooms, and in the front an open hall raised about five feet from the ground to which the ascent is made by a few steps. The hall is quite open at the sides and front, and in length about fifty-two paces, and though it is called the Hall of the Forty Columns, it is really supported by only eighteen. Each pillar is covered with pieces of looking-glass, and the sides are of marble mixed up with much glass. In the centre of the hall are marble basins containing water ; inside there is a fine room with pictures of various events in the lives of the Sufi kings. One represents Shah Abbas fighting the Uzbegs, another the reception of the Uzbegs' ambassador, and another Shah Temasp receiving the Emperor of Hindustan, Humayun, who took refuge at his court. Upon my pointing out to the guardian of the building that there were only eighteen pillars, while it was called the Hall of Forty Pillars, he said that the eighteen pillars being covered with looking-glass, and being reflected in large marble basins full of water, made it appear as if there were forty pillars. In the outer hall there hangs a picture of Nasr-un-din Shah.

I went one day to visit the Prince-Governor of Ispahan, the eldest son of Nasr-un-din Shah, though not the Crown Prince. He is supposed to resemble his father very much, and has the title of Zil-es-Sultan or Shadow of the Shah. His name is Sultan Maksud Mirza. He is a fine-looking man, as are all the members of the Kajar tribe, who are typical Turks, and not of the Persian type at all. They

can all speak Persian, but do not do so amongst their own women and families, when they always speak their native Turki.

The Zil-es-Sultan was most civil and kind to me, he presented me with his photograph, and showed me a beautiful parrot of which he was very fond. It was a South American species, and talked Arabic (!) which at this period I did not understand, but afterwards learnt a little.

Sultan Mizra had at this time a very large part of Persia under his rule, namely Ispahan, Yezd, and down to the Persian Gulf at Mohomera on the Shutt-el-Arab, which is the name of the united stream of the Tigris and Euphrates after their junction. He had put down thieving and highway robbery in a wonderful way in his dominions, and the roads were safe. Of course in a despotic country acts are committed which would seem very terrible in England, but on the whole his government was that of an enlightened ruler. He was not at all bigoted, and would not permit Christians or Jews to be persecuted in any way, but allowed them the full exercise of their religion, and also subscribed both to the Protestant and Armenian schools in Julfa. While I was in Ispahan, he ordered all the shops in the bazaars to be left open during the night for two or three days to see if there were any thieves about. This order was carried out, and I did not hear of any theft, but I expect most of the valuables in the shops were taken away by their owners.

The Zil-es-Sultan's palace was very simple and he did not keep up much state. The palace in which the prince lived and in which he received me, is

close to the Chail Situn before mentioned. He dressed in a uniform of a brownish colour, not quite khaki, and except that he had a guard of soldiers at the door, there was nothing to distinguish his palace from the house of any other rich Persian. Beyond the palace there was a great square, generally known as the Maidan-i-Shah, or the King's Plain, an open space about 440 paces long by 150 wide with a very high pole in the middle for use at executions. This is the square where executions take place and the bodies of malefactors are exposed for a time. On one of the narrow sides of the square there is a magnificent mosque with four high minarets. The dome and minarets are of fine faience of beautiful colours worked in patterns, blue forming the ground-work. As Christians are not allowed to enter a mosque in Persia, I could not go inside it. It was built by Shah Abbas the Great, and is known as Musjid-i-Shah. Opposite this mosque is situated a handsome gateway known as Dur-i-Kaisirie or the Gate of Cæsarea, as it is copied from a gateway said to have existed at Cæsarea. About the middle of the long side of the oblong there is another mosque called Musjid-i-Shaik Lutufulla, not so large as the Musjid-i-Shah, but the quality of the faience of the dome is even superior, a turquoise blue ground with a large white flower being very effective. Opposite the mosque of Shaik-i-Lutufulla there is a gateway called Aali Kapou, and over this gate is a lofty 'balakhana' or open-fronted hall, in which the kings used to sit and see any spectacle which might be taking place in the great square.

There is a remarkable tower in Ispahan which has a curious history. It was built by one of the Sufi Shahs, who, on its completion, ordered it to be decorated with fine heads of game, and sent out his hunters to procure remarkable horns and heads. When the architect came to report that it was finished and decorated as desired by the Shah, he added that one head was wanted to complete the scheme of decoration; whereupon the Shah ordered that it should be completed by the architect's own head being cut off and inserted in the masonry. I need not say that the head is no longer there.

The bazaars of Ispahan are poor after those of Teheran. While I was at Julfa, I attended a smart Armenian wedding, the occasion being the marriage of the son of the secretary of the Archbishop. The invitation was to dinner at 6 p.m. and to stay all night and attend the wedding ceremony which took place at 7 a.m. the next day. I went accompanied by my kind friends the Bruces. The ladies were most gorgeously appareled in silks and satins of all the hues of the rainbow and covered with jewels and gold coins. The ladies and gentlemen sat apart. The Bruces and myself were allowed to go home about 11 p.m., but the majority of the company remained all night so as to be present at the actual marriage ceremony the following day.

As Persia is inhabited by three distinct races, the Shah, if he wishes an edict to be universally understood, must issue it in three languages, Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, and this seems to have been always the case from the most ancient times. The

celebrated edict of Darius at Behistun, a part of which was read by Sir Henry Rawlinson, is in three languages, one the Turanian or Turkish tongue, the second the Semitic or Arab tongue, and the third, the Arian or Persian tongue; and the present Shah, if he is to be understood by all his subjects, must still issue an edict in modern derivatives of these three tongues. Things really alter very little in Persia in the course of ages.

Persians declare that in times of great famine manna does occasionally fall in Persia. I do not here allude to the sweet substance called manna, the produce of a tamarisk tree in Persia, which is sold under the name of manna, and is found under those trees; but I was assured by Persians that during the late famine, when two millions of Persians died of starvation, manna did sometimes fall from heaven. Twice I was shown samples of the substance by a missionary in Persia, who had been given them in different parts of the country as having fallen from the sky. The two samples differed in appearance, one was in very small particles of a whitish colour, and shapeless, looking something like the central portion of a farinaceous seed; the other was larger and coarser, but somewhat similar in character, and looked as if it had been cut out of the centre of a grain of Indian corn, but it was of quite different substance from Indian corn. The missionary, who showed it me, declared that Persians firmly believe that manna does fall occasionally in times of great famine. It would be very interesting if this phenomenon could be observed by some European. A very common

cause of death during the famine was that the people consumed, when without other food, great quantities of vine leaves, which seemed to have a disastrous effect on starving people, though I have myself eaten, and even liked, small quantities of cooked vine-leaves as a vegetable with other food, but that is quite different from a starving multitude falling on a vineyard and eating up the vine-leaves wholesale in the absence of any other food.

Sir Anthony and Sir Robert Shirley, accompanied by a suite of twenty-six persons, entered Ispahan during the reign of Shah Abbas the Great as the ambassadors of Rudolph II., Emperor of Germany, and these Englishmen entered the Shah's service, drilled his troops, and cast cannon for him. Sir Anthony Shirley was three times wounded in battle fighting for Shah Abbas against the Turks. Shah Abbas re-took Georgia from the Turks, and Kandahar from Shah Jehan, Emperor of India, and also, with the assistance of the English merchants of Gumberoon, or Bunder Abbas, who supplied a fleet, took the Island of Ormuz, in the Persian Gulf, from the Portuguese. Shah Abbas, after raising Persia to a high state of prosperity and power, died in 1628. During his reign, Sir Dodmore Cotton was sent by James I of England as Ambassador to Ispahan.



## CHAPTER X

*(See large map of Khorasan for route)*

### IN DISGUISE

ON September 30th, 1880, I left Julfa (Ispahan) after a pleasant sojourn there with Dr. Bruce, the Missionary, and Mrs Bruce. I shall always remember their kindness and hospitality. I started about 1 o'clock in the afternoon accompanied by my 'mirza' or secretary, (an Armenian named Bethlehem Sookias) and an Armenian servant, Johannes. Both these men could speak a little Hindustani, which was convenient in case we wanted to converse in any other language than Persian, for when we spoke in Hindustani, the country people thought it was Armenian. I travelled, still dressed as a European, along the Hamadan road, across the Zaindarud river and through a part of the town of Ispahan, and then on to a place called Anoushirwan, about eleven-and-a-half miles, where there was a good caravanserai in which I spent the night.

The next day I went away from the Hamadan road towards the direct road from Ispahan to Teheran, but we lost our way, and finally put

up at a village called Habibabad, where we found we were about eleven-and-a-half miles from Ispahan on the road from Ispahan to Yazd. I might have come here direct from Ispahan much more easily than by the route I had actually covered, but I did not wish the people in Julfa to know where I was going. On the road to-day in a desert place I changed from my European dress to an Armenian or Persian dress. I put on a knitted silk skull-cap, and over it a black lambskin hat. I also donned a long tight-fitting coat of blue-glazed chintz, and over that a loose Persian plum-coloured cloth overcoat. I had white cloth shoes, and ordinary Persian trousers. The remainder of my European clothes I put away in my saddle bag, but my felt helmet I threw down a ruined well, where, if it is ever found, it will give rise to curious speculation as to what it is and how it came there. I missed the protection my helmet afforded me from the sun very much, but this was the only article of European dress of which I felt the loss. All the other garments of my Persian dress were more convenient and comfortable than those which I had just discarded, and I considered I could go about better in Persian garb than in European and without attracting so much observation and enquiry in out-of-the-way places. Of course, though I could speak Persian, our Persian would have betrayed all three of us as not being natives of Persia, so we described ourselves as Calcutta Armenian traders. Many Calcutta Armenians do visit Julfa, and if I wanted to say anything to my companions, which I did not wish to be understood, I spoke



"KWAJAH IBRAHIM "

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in Hindustani, which the hearer would suppose was Armenian. My companions called me Kwajah Ibrahim and addressed me as "Agha" or Master. I had three good ponies, one for my own riding, and one for my "mirza," and one which carried a large pair of saddle-bags with my clothes in them and on which my groom and general servant, Johannes, rode.

We started from Habibabad on the 2nd October for Wartun, said to be about twenty miles off, and soon plunged into real desert and found no sweet water till we reached Wartun. On the road we passed many salt pans where salt was being collected. At last, after passing through country very much impregnated with salt, we saw a few trees in the distance and a small running stream of fresh water, where we and our horses were very glad to quench our thirst. We succeeded in hiring a house in Wartun where, the next day being Sunday, we halted. I managed to purchase some fruit from a passing caravan which was carrying to Teheran grapes and melons grown in a place not far off. I got three delicious melons, two water-melons and a small basket of beautiful grapes for ninepence-halfpenny.

On Monday, the 4th October, I started again, having first hired a donkey to carry the saddle-bags which were on the horse ridden by Johannes, so as to lighten its load. At the end of sixteen miles we reached Fashark, where we managed to hire a house situated in a nice garden, and purchased thirty-five fine peaches for sixpence. My "mirza" to-day had a nasty accident as he was riding over

a "karez" or underground canal, owing to the ground giving way under his horse and precipitating him into the water below. Fortunately it was very near the exit of the canal, where the water was not deep, so he was not much hurt. This is a very common accident in Persia, where these "karezes" or underground canals are very numerous.

October 5th. Marched twenty miles to Mashkinan, passing through a more or less barren country, but far from being in the nature of desert. Mashkinan is a very small and poor village. The inhabitants said they had suffered much during the famine which desolated all this part of Persia seven years ago, when nearly three-quarters of the population died of starvation.

October 6th. I was now on the road from Ispahan to Yazd, passing through better country. I went to Ballabad, twenty miles, leaving the regular Yazd road and getting on to the Nain road, but I decided not to go to Nain as I knew there was a telegraph office there, and I was aware that, in Persia, a weekly despatch is sent from all telegraph stations to the Minister of Telegraphs for the information of the Shah, describing any remarkable person who may have passed through the village during the week, and I did not care to have an interview with the clerk in my disguise to which I had not, as yet, got thoroughly accustomed. Also I heard that the road through Nain passed across a piece of the "kavir" or Persian desert, where there was no water for sixty miles. I therefore determined to travel by the town of Ardakan, which had no telegraph office, as from

there there was no single stretch of desert so long as sixty miles without water. So I retraced some of my road of yesterday to a village called Bowniz Balla, a tolerably prosperous place. Here I was able to purchase some mutton and vegetables, which was a great treat, as hitherto I had been unable to buy anything but fowls since leaving Ispahan.

This day I noticed, at the entrance of one of the 'karezs' or underground canals, many blind fish swimming about in the water. These fish, which are very common in these underground canals in Persia, have been so long shut up in the dark that they have lost the power of sight.

We marched twenty-eight miles to the little mud fort of Cha Nu garrisoned by two men. The water here was dreadfully brackish, and nothing that either man or beast could eat or drink was to be had except some beetroot. We purchased a quantity of this from the soldiers, chopped it up and gave it to the horses mixed with a little barley, which I had managed to obtain from a passing traveller. The horses drank a little of the water, but we could not, though we managed to drink some cocoa and milk (a tin of which I happened to have) made with it, but it was very nasty. I spent the night here in much discomfort, dreaming of running streams.

We started early in the morning of October the 9th, and at the end of about ten miles we got a drink of slightly brackish water, which tasted very good after the filthy stuff we had been drinking yesterday. At the end of about twenty-four miles we stopped at the pretty little village of Sarwar, where we got very comfortable quarters in a pome-

granate garden belonging to the house of a "mollah," or priest, and where we stayed the next day.

On the 11th we marched to Ardakan, a town of about 20,000 inhabitants, which has some trade even with India. Several Parsees, or 'Fire-Worshippers,' reside here, and they carry on a trade with India, exporting a dye-root called 'rhonas' (grown about here) to Bombay. There is a telegraph station at a small town named Maibut about seven miles from Ardakan, but I did not go there.

I decided to cross the desert to Tabbas by the direct road, which few European travellers have traversed, Colonel Macgregor being one of the very few. On the road I travelled there is no inhabited place for forty-four miles. For the first two miles out of Ardakan the country is cultivated, and at Haoz-i-Safid, eighteen miles, two reservoirs of water were reached; a few rare tussocks of coarse grass grow about here. Though there were two reservoirs here, only one of them contained any water.

The heat while crossing this barren plain was terrible. In India, where the sun is also fairly hot, I was considered to have a wonderful power of bearing it, but the heat here was very much greater than any I had ever felt in India, and I was obliged to put a towel over my head, as my Persian hat was very little protection. At thirty-one miles from Ardakan we reached a place called "Chasma" or "the Spring." It was not inhabited, but there was a small spring of water covered in by a domed roof, and near it was a small, half-ruined caravanseri. As the caravanseri was very



dirty and probably contained a horrid sort of poisonous bug which persecutes people who sleep in dirty places in Persia, I laid my blankets down near the spring on the stony hill-side and slept for a few hours. I found the stones rather hard, as I had only a very small amount of bedding. It is a curious circumstance I have often noticed, that the stones one chooses for one's pillow are never soft, though I flatter myself I am as good at choosing stones for pillows as most people. At this place I met a Dervish near the caravanseri loading some fine camels (not his own property) with soil sodden with animal droppings which he was going to carry to a village, distant thirty-five miles, as manure for a wheat field, so highly do Persians value manure as to send so far for it. This Dervish was an amusing fellow, so I asked him to dinner. We were very anxious not to let him depart till morning, as I and my two servants could not raise the pony load alone, and we managed to keep him until nearly 4 a.m., when we loaded up and marched about eleven and a half miles through a pass between hills to Homin, a little green oasis in the middle of the desert. There is a large village called Kharuna, about seven miles off, which was visited by Colonel Macgregor on his journey, and also a small hamlet of forty inhabitants about one mile from Homin. These are the only inhabited places in all this country, which is otherwise a wilderness of stony hills and plains interspersed with strips of salt desert. At this village there was growing a species of barley with which I was previously unacquainted. Ordinary barley and wheat are grown in Persia

and India as a winter crop, but this bitter, or black, barley is grown as a summer crop, and comes to maturity, so I was told, in about seventy days from the time of sowing. With this barley the natives are able to obtain two crops in the same year off the land, one sown in October and the other in August. That sown in August can be reaped in October early enough to plant the winter variety. Horses do not like it so well as the ordinary barley, as it is slightly bitter.

At Homin I purchased a fine pair of horns of the European ibex. When I was in India, I possessed a European ibex which had been captured when young in the Suleimani range of mountains, and its horns were just like these, very different from the horns of the Kashmir breed. This ibex I had was a very savage animal, and used to attack my servants who were much afraid of him, as he could butt very violently, but if firmly met and seized by his long beard and one horn, he was quite powerless.

I halted one day at Homin, and left in the afternoon of the 15th. At seven miles I came to Kharuna. This is the place passed through by Colonel Macgregor, and is on the direct road from Yazd to Tabbas. The road passes down a great ravine, until some water named "Doh Kulli" is reached, near the intersection of two great ravines. Here there was a small garden and one inhabited house. As I had no guide, I missed the water in the dark, and slept that night by the roadside, without water. Early in the morning I went back and found I had passed the spring, it being a hundred yards off the road in a side ravine. The distance

of this water from Kharuna village is eleven miles. After watering our horses I went on to Rizab, twenty-six miles, where I found a tiny spring of slightly brackish water, and a very poor caravanseri. There was once a village here, but it was deserted by its inhabitants in consequence of raids by Baluchi marauders.

Early on the 17th of October, I reached the poor village of Sukand, or Sagand, thirteen miles; here there was a good spring of water brought by a "kariz" (or underground canal), and a fine caravanseri. I found the people of Sagand in a great state of alarm, expecting an attack from Baluchi marauders, 300 of whom were out from Seistan, plundering and raiding along this road. It is curious that, while along the northern frontier of Persia there are constant raids by Turkomans, in this part raids are made by Baluchis, who, mounted on swift-riding camels, swoop down and raid the unwarlike Persian population. Here I tried to hire a donkey to carry my baggage, but as the owner would have had to accompany him, they all refused. Finally, when I pointed out that the Baluchis were raiding some distance northward, and were not likely, as yet, to have got between us and the next stage, I persuaded the owner of two donkeys, on the payment of three times the ordinary rate, to accompany me for forty-six miles to the next village, Pusht-i-Badan. We started across country which can only be described as a howling wilderness. This stage and the next, from Pusht-i-Badan to Robad-i-Khan, are sample tracts of true desert not surpassed by any in the world. Northward extends

the "kavir" or great Persian salt desert, and south-east stretches the Dasht-i-Lut towards Baluchistan.

I remained a night at Sagand and about one o'clock in the afternoon, after watering the horses (as there is no drinkable water for the whole forty-six miles, to Robat-i-Khan) I started. I was told I should probably meet marauders at Illahabad, about seventeen miles from Sagand, where was a ruined village which possessed a stronger fort than is usually found, but it had been deserted for the last twenty-five years since it was plundered by Baluchis. Here we found a deep well and drew some water, but it proved very brackish. There was also a good caravanseri here, but it was utterly deserted, as there was difficulty in getting water from this well, and when drawn was not drinkable. I was told the last Baluchi raid had taken place five or six years ago, when some men were killed here, and a large flock of sheep carried off. Soon after passing this village we crossed a piece of "kavir," or actual salt desert. Though the whole of the country we were now travelling over is called "kavir," only parts of it are actually salt, and look as if they had formed part of an inland sea. When the upheaval occurred, the rivers which formerly fell into the sea, having no other outlet, continued to flow into it, the bed being still considerably below the level of the surrounding country.

It is difficult to describe these pieces of "kavir." One sort appears as if the ground had been ploughed up and left for some time, then as if heavy rain had fallen upon it, and a glazed coating of salt clay had afterwards formed over it. When trodden upon this

coating gives way, and the horse's hoofs sink into a powdery soil containing much salt. Sometimes the whole soil seems rotten, and the feet sink deeply into it, salt showing on the surface. Occasionally a damp spot is found which has a curious appearance as if it had sweated up from beneath. Crossing one of these damp spots on a moonlight night, a strange weird sort of feeling comes over one, as if this ground was the wrinkled skin of some loathsome giant reptile like the fabled dragons of old, and this shiny moisture was its noisome sweat.

I halted on this "kavir," and slept a few hours by the roadside. After travelling twenty-one miles I started \* again about 1 a.m. and passed over similar desolate country until daylight, when at thirty-five miles we found two small water-holes by the roadside which were permanent, but the water was quite unfit for human consumption and only suited for camels. Our horses did drink a very little, which, however, enabled them to eat some grain I had brought for them. After leaving the water-holes, a pass between low hills extends for nearly five miles, and then a stony plain is entered, and at forty-six miles from the start, the poor village of Pusht-i-Badan is reached. It contained about 150 inhabitants, and provisions were very scarce. There was a dirty caravanseri with a stream of brackish water near, but at the village itself there was a small stream of good water. Again I had much difficulty in hiring a man and

\* This sentence should probably read as follows :—" After travelling twenty-one miles I halted on this 'kavir' and slept a few hours by the roadside. I started again about 1 a.m. and passed over," . . . etc.

[B. S.]

two donkeys to go on with me, as Baluchi raiders were said to be in the neighbourhood.

I left Pusht-i-Badan at 2 p.m. on the 20th October for Robat-i-Khan, distant forty-eight miles. This was the worst journey on the whole road, and the desert was more terrible and trying than on any other march. After six miles of the usual barren plain, we reached a small hamlet of four houses and a tower, with a spring of brackish water and a very small patch of cultivation. Fourteen miles further on a small but very rocky ridge was attained, where we found an empty reservoir and an unoccupied tower named Haoz-i-Shah-Abba. This point is the boundary between the Persian portion of Yazd and Khorasan. Khorasan is the ancient Parthia, and though it is a province of Persia, it is looked upon by ordinary Persians as a foreign country. At this point my guide being in a violent state of alarm and expecting an attack by Baluchis, I quitted the road and found a depression in the ground where I fed the horses and went to sleep. At the end of three hours we went on again and crossed a very trying piece of desert, the horses sinking up to their fetlocks in sand and sometimes much deeper. For many miles I do not think we exceeded a rate of two and a half miles per hour, and though it was a lovely moonlight night, the donkeys and guide with one servant remained behind while the other servant and myself tried to push on, but we had much difficulty in keeping along the road. It would have been very serious if we had lost our way in this sandy desert, as the heat at this season is terrible, and anyone getting lost in this sand would perish in a very few hours.

At twenty-nine miles the road ascended a low rocky range of hills and we reached firm ground again which was a great relief after the treacherous sand. At thirty-seven miles the road descended again to the plain, and a tiny spring of fresh water was found a little to the right of the road. Here stood an old tower and the ruins of a fort. I had been particularly warned against stopping at this place, as it was said to be the favourite haunt of Baluchi raiders. So after watering our horses, and filling my leather water-bottle, which held about two quarts of water, we went on for half a mile and hid in a ravine to feed the horses, and when the donkeys with the guide and my other servant came up we took them also into this ravine and rested a short time. We continued along the usual arid plain interspersed with occasional patches of sand until, at forty-two miles, we entered an open pass between low hills, and at the end of about two and a half miles reached the small fort of Robat-i-Khan, forty-eight miles from our starting point. Here there was a fine caravanseri, and a small stream of rather brackish water. There is some cultivation here, but barely enough to support the inhabitants, who live chiefly by importing provisions from more fertile parts of Khorasan, and selling them at an exorbitant rate to the numerous pilgrims and caravans which pass along from southern Persia to the holy shrine of Imam Raaza at Mash-had. The excitement about Baluchis culminated at this place. There was a petty Governor here, who was supposed to protect travellers, but as he had only five horsemen, the amount of protection he could afford was very limited. He

came to see me and said that there was a band of Baluchis plundering in the immediate neighbourhood, and that he had orders from the Governor of Tabbas to stop all travellers. I here met two men and their wives who had all been carried off by Baluchi marauders and stripped of everything they possessed. One of their party, who gave offence by declaring his inability to guide the Baluchis, was hacked to pieces with swords, but they themselves (being 'Sayuds,' or holy men) and their wives were released. I also met two other men who said that, after being carried about with their wives for three days by the Baluchis, they had then been despoiled of everything they possessed except a very little clothing for the women, and afterwards released near here. They said the Baluchi party consisted of thirty-seven men mounted on quick-riding camels, which only require water every other day, and can even go three or four days without water, and these Baluchis, who can travel seventy or eighty miles a day, raid the country for great distances. Baluchis, however, are not as much dreaded as Turkomans, as the former do not carry their prisoners off for ransom, but only plunder them and then let them go, while Turkomans generally kill their prisoners if they cannot carry them off for ransom. The Governor said that, besides the band of Baluchis near here, a very large band was raiding to the northward of Tabbas.

One of my servants was beaten in a most unprovoked manner, and the people, believing me to be an Armenian merchant, rushed up to my quarters evidently intending to do the same to me, but as I always carried a revolver I threatened them with it,



and found it had a most calming effect on the turbulent natives, who thereupon begged my pardon, and drew off, at the same time offering a sheep as atonement for beating my servant, which of course I refused. The people about here were a most ignorant and fanatical lot of Mohammedans, and evidently thought they might beat Armenian Christians with impunity. I complained to the local petty Governor who roundly abused the people for attacking my servant. The caravanseri here was crowded with pilgrims, and the place was not at all comfortable in consequence. The pilgrims, who were from the districts about Yazd and Ispahan and were therefore accustomed to see Armenians, were most civil to us. A caravan consisting of about fifty camels attempted to leave but were stopped by order of the Governor, but later in the night they were allowed to start by a mountain road on payment of a small sum. I here met a very civil camel man, named Ali Kuli Beg, of Nain, who was on his way with a caravan of sugar and other goods from Yazd to Birjand, a town of considerable importance, ten marches from Tabbas towards Seistan. I succeeded in hiring a camel from him to carry my servant and saddle-bags.

After three days' detention in this horrid place, we started soon after dark. Ali Kuli Beg would not travel with the pilgrims, as he said they were such helpless people if attacked by Baluchis, but we joined his caravan. When we started every precaution was taken, the villagers not being allowed to know which road we had taken, while the camels' bells were taken off and strict silence enforced. I was left behind as

I did not know the exact hour of starting, and the caravan left an hour and a half earlier than had been intended, so I had to ride after it, and nearly missed the road, but Ali Kuli Beg had left a man behind to guide me and I soon overtook him. The night was very dark and we marched along very silently. The footfall of the camels can hardly be heard as they have such soft pads under their feet. We had about fifty camels with us, and, marching all night, after about fifteen miles, came to the village of Jefferabad, the male population of which consisted of only twenty men. All went about armed, which is not usual in Persia except near the Turkoman border. There was a fine tower here, and in the evening eight of the men paraded who, after their arms and ammunition were inspected, took up a position at the top of the tower. As they were all dressed alike and were fine tall men, they had a very soldierly appearance. They told me they did this every night, whether Baluchis were known to be about or not, but added that three years previously they had been raided by Baluchis and property to the value of 100 tomans (about 1,000 francs) carried off. They spoke most disparagingly of the Khan of Tabbas, saying he was a woman and no man, and that he was rich and drew an allowance from the Shah to keep up 500 cavalry, but he pocketed the money and allowed his subjects to be plundered.

We had travelled to Jefferabad through a stony pass, named Durra Dhri, which had been very trying to the camels.

## CHAPTER XI

### MY DISGUISE IS SUSPECTED

THE next day, the 25th October, we reached Chardeh, a small group of villages a few miles from the town of Tabbas. I halted here a day or two as I wanted to purchase a mule, having found much difficulty in hiring donkeys or camels at each march. I sent my "mirza," Bethlehem, into Tabbas where he managed to purchase a very fair mule. My difficulties after this became much less, as I now had one horse for my own riding, one for my "mirza," and one for my groom, Johannes, while the mule carried the large saddle-bags alone. Previously the saddle-bags and the groom were both carried by one animal.

One day I rode into Tabbas to see it, but found nothing of particular note there, as it was only a very ordinary Persian town.

From Tabbas, I travelled north-westward, across a desert country with some strips of "kavir," to Sultana-bad, the chief town of the district of Turshiz. The whole country up to Turshiz was more or less desert, but not nearly so bad as the country I had passed over after leaving Ardakan. From Turshiz I went to

Turbat-Hidari, after which there was no more desert ; in fact I may say that there was practically none after Turshiz. At Sultanabad I met a Russian subject, a Mohammedan, sent by the Russian Consular Agent at Mashad to purchase grain for the Russian army under General Skobelof at Geok Tepe, who was buying up very large quantities. At Turbat-Hidari I met two Afghan merchants. One of these came into a room in the caravanseri, in which I was sitting alone, and said, "What is up? you, I know, are an Englishman, I have known the English too well while trading in Amritza and the Punjab to be taken in." I replied, "You know a great deal." He said, "I am now on my way to Kandahar; do you know St John Sahib there?" If I had answered that I did not know him, he would have immediately suspected me, but I said at once, "Yes, I do know St John Sahib; I knew him many years ago when he was Superintendent of Telegraphs at Shiraz." He immediately asked, "Will you give me a letter to him?" I replied, "Yes, though I do not think my letter will do you much good. I will tell you what I will say in it. I will say that so-and-so, an Afghan merchant, of whom I know nothing, but whom I met at Turbat Hidari, asked me for a letter to St John Sahib, and that I, the merchant Kwajah Ibrahim, whom St John Sahib knew at Shiraz many years ago, gave him the letter. Do you think such a letter would do you any good?" Now if I had said that I did not know Sir Oliver St John, and would not give him a letter, he would have been confirmed in his opinion that I was an Englishman, but finding I was ready to give him

a letter and that I did not deny I knew Sir Oliver St John, he left me for a short time, rather shaken in his opinion, and brought another Afghan merchant who was travelling with him, and they came and sat before me to talk me over, finally agreeing I was not an Englishman. This was the only occasion during my disguise on which my being an Armenian was doubted.

From Turbat Hidari I travelled almost directly north towards Mash-had, and reached the caravanseri of Robat Turukh about six miles from Mash-had. Here I remained a few days, as I did not like to go into the town of Mash-had, because there were several people there I did not wish to meet. One was Mirza Abbas Khan, the English Consular Agent, whom I knew to be a sharp man, and might at once suspect me, and report my arrival to the British Minister in Teheran, who would immediately have ordered me back. In fact I was in disguise more to hide myself from the British and Russian Ministers than from anybody else.

After three days I left Robat Turukh and, without going through Mash-had, struck the road to Daragez, travelling by Radkan and Towarik to Mahomadabad, the chief town of Daragez.

On arrival I called upon the Governor with some presents, and he assigned me a house in which to put up. I told him that my name was Kwajah Ibrahim, an Armenian merchant of Calcutta, who had come up to Daragez to buy horses for the Bombay market, and that I hoped he would assist me in purchasing some good Turkoman horses. He owned several horses himself, and was very pleased

at the idea as he thought I might be induced to purchase largely. He asked me many questions as to the condition of the Armenians in Calcutta, and whether they were oppressed by the British. Having settled myself in the house allotted to me, I found there was an Englishman in the town, Mr O'Donovan, the correspondent of the *Daily News*. After a day or two I called upon him, and introduced myself under my assumed name. As Mr O'Donovan spoke no Persian, but only Turkish and English, I had to speak English to him, which drew forth the remark, "Kwajah Ibrahim, how well you speak English!" I said, "Calcutta Armenians receive a very fair education." After this I used to see Mr O'Donovan almost daily, and used to supply him with information which I picked up in my peregrinations through the bazaar. I also found that Mirza Abbas Khan, the English Agent at Mash-had, was in the habit of sending a man weekly to the Russian camp at Geok Tepe to obtain news of what was happening there during the siege by the Russians. On his return journey I used to make a point of seeing this man, and smoke with him, when, on presenting him with about four francs of Persian money, he would give me any information he might have concerning the siege.

To keep up my character of an Armenian horse-dealer, I purchased a few Turkoman horses from the Governor, who charged me a very good price for them, but it suited me to pay this in order to avert suspicion.

The Turkomans were constantly raiding right up to the walls of Mahomadabad. The whole country

is thickly covered with small towers, which are known in Persia as Turkoman towers. They are small but high, and are built as refuges for the inhabitants when they are attacked by Turkomans while cultivating their fields. These towers have tiny holes for the entrance of the refugees who take shelter in them, and can only be entered by a man crawling in on all fours. When a Turkoman comes in pursuit and attempts to wriggle himself through the hole, he generally receives a sword-cut or bullet wound in his skull. The people here are always well armed whenever they leave the town, and if they get into one of these towers, they are pretty safe even if unarmed, because some large stones are always kept inside ready at hand with which to crack the skull of anyone trying to follow after them. The Persians stand in terrible fear of the Turkomans, though I do not think the latter are a brave people, in spite of the dread they have inspired. I had evidence of this when I was employed later on the Perso-Afghan frontier near Herat, where I found things were very different. If a village was inhabited by people of Persian race, the Turkomans used to raid it, but they seldom attempted a raid on a village inhabited by Afghans, and when they did occasionally venture to do so, they generally suffered a severe defeat from a body of Afghan troops very inferior to them in numbers. An Afghan speaks with contempt of the Turkomans, while admiring them as cavalry for the great aptitude they have of getting over the ground, and the sudden rushes they manage to make on their swift horses, but they consider them decidedly lacking in courage. The Persians

however, being even more deficient in this quality than the Turkomans, naturally stand in some awe of them.

Many times, while I was at Mahomadabad, a call was given from the minarets of the mosque, "Turkomans, Turkomans, mount and away!" which was the signal for the Governor's cavalry, of whom about 400 were kept in the town, to go in pursuit, but I noticed that, though the Turkomans were driven off, they seldom met even the very inferior Persian cavalry. Occasionally a Turkoman prisoner was brought back, but not often, and upon enquiry I found that what really happened in these cases was that the Turkoman horseman, in his flight, had been driven into a swampy bit of ground, where his horse was bogged and the man, attacked by thirty or forty cavalry while on foot, at once surrendered. I never heard that any of the Persian cavalry were even wounded in these encounters. After I had been some time at Mahomadabad, the Governor, calling in all his cavalry, to the number, perhaps, of some 600 or a little more, from the neighbouring villages, determined to go out to a place close to the Persian border named Lutfabad. He gave both Mr O'Donovan and myself permission to accompany him. Lutfabad has now a station of the Trans-Caspian Russian railroad near it; at this period, of course, there was no Russian railroad anywhere near.

After two days the Governor returned to Mahomadabad, and I with him. I went to visit the prison at Mahomadabad where some twenty Turkoman prisoners were kept until they could pay ransom. One of these prisoners had a bullet wound



in the back of his thigh, the bullet was sticking out, only the point of it having entered. Mr O'Donovan, who was with me, had been a medical student, and he tried to extract the bullet, but as he had nothing but a pair of common scissors with which to do it, he was not successful.

In the prison, on this occasion, I saw an instance of the utter cruelty of the Persians towards their prisoners. A poor Turkoman prisoner had been ill and they thought he was going to die. Now the Shah pays the Governor five tomans for each Turkoman scalp sent to him, but nothing is paid for a dead Turkoman. When they found that this man would earn nothing for them, they determined to cut his throat and then scalp him. They fixed upon one of the other Turkoman prisoners, and informed him that he must cut the sick man's throat and then scalp him, otherwise he would be killed himself. When I arrived, the body was lying in the yard with the throat cut, and the wretched Turkoman prisoner was being made to scalp his comrade. The scalp would be sent to the Shah who would pay five tomans for it and would, of course, be told it had been taken in battle. I felt so disgusted that I called on the Governor and remonstrated, but he only laughed, and looked upon it as the most ordinary thing. The Persians, like all cowards, are very cruel.

Soon after my return from Lutfabad, I heard that Geok Tepe had fallen, and that General Skobelev was coming to Lutfabad with a Russian force. As I did not care to meet General Skobelev, I determined to return to Mash-had, and left Mahomadabad.

Before leaving, however, I told Mr O'Donovan who I was, as I knew he would hear about my identity from Mash-had, but he would not believe me until I had shewn him my passport, being firmly convinced I really was an Armenian. I had only worn the disguise because I could travel about more conveniently as an Armenian than as an Englishman. Also I felt certain that if Sir Ronald Thomson, the English Minister at Teheran, had heard of my wandering about the Persian border near the Turkoman country, he would have ordered me back, and even if he did not, the Russian Minister at Teheran would have asked him to do it, and I had no doubt he would have acquiesced.

I returned in eight marches to Mash-had, and just before entering that town, I threw off my disguise and dressed in a suit of European clothes which I had in my saddle bags. I sent on my 'mirza' with a Persian letter to Mirza Abbas Khan, the British Consular Agent at Mash-had, telling him that Colonel Stewart, an English officer, was arriving at Mash-had, and asking him to meet me at the entrance of the town. I hired a house at Mash-had and stayed there some time. The day I entered Mash-had was the 9th February, 1881. I had travelled in my disguise over a large part of Persia since the 29th of September, 1880, never having but once been suspected of being a European, and that by an Afghan merchant from the Punjab, when I was passing through Turbat Hidari, and even in that case I managed to allay the man's suspicions.

I called upon the Governor-General of Khorasan, the Shah's brother, the Rukn-ud-Dowlah, who was

much interested in hearing that I had been living on his northern frontier for some time. As I knew that he kept spies on all Europeans who entered his province, I said to him, "Did your Highness ever hear of me when I was travelling in your province?" "Yes," he said, "I did once, when you passed near Mash-had but I could get no trace of you again. A man came and told me that he had seen an Armenian surveying, and I knew at once that it must have been a European in Armenian dress, but I could hear nothing further of him." I then remembered that one day, when I was taking my bearings with a prismatic compass between Turbat Hidari and Mash-had, a man had come up and spoken to me. I thought he suspected me of something as he said, thinking my prismatic compass was a watch, "What is the time?" I replied, "I can tell you the time, it is just twelve o'clock." No doubt it was this man who went and told the Governor-General that he had seen an Armenian surveying, but the Governor was quite sharp enough to know that it was much more likely to be a European than an Armenian surveyor, and came to the conclusion that he was a European in disguise, though he honestly confessed he never could get any further news of him. Of course if I had passed through Mash-had on my previous journey, I might have been discovered, but I carefully avoided doing so.

A few days after I returned to Mash-had, Captain Gill, of the Royal Engineers, also arrived there. Mirza Abbas Khan at once telegraphed his arrival to Sir Ronald Thomson, who immediately ordered him to leave that part of the country. I also on arrival at Mash-had telegraphed to Sir Ronald

Thomson, telling him that I had arrived and was shortly leaving for Teheran. I asked Captain Gill to stay with me for the few days he was remaining, which he did.

An amusing scene occurred at Mash-had on Captain Gill trying to hire a servant to accompany him to Teheran, as he had no servant with him. As Captain Gill spoke little Persian, he wanted to get a servant who could speak some European language, and a man appeared who spoke a little English. I had seen him at Mahomadabad in the service of Mr O'Donovan whom he had accompanied from Turkey. This man gave a great jump when he saw me sitting with Captain Gill, dressed in European costume, as of course he recognised me as the Armenian who had been in Daragez. My servants told me that one day in Daragez this man had come to them and said, "This Kwajah Ibrahim, your master, has quite spoilt my market; he has told my master the price of everything, and I really can make no money out of him, I won't stay with him any more. I hear there is a European traveller expected shortly in Khorasan, named Colonel Stewart; I shall go and take service with him, as I shall be able to cheat him." I cannot think how this man heard I was going to Khorasan, because I did not tell people in Teheran that such was my intention.

When he came into the room, he recognised me as the Armenian trader who had told his master the prices of everything, and whom he never suspected of being a European. I engaged this man to accompany Captain Gill to Teheran, because, though he was a cheat, I do not suppose he was

any worse than any other servant would have been.

After remaining about a fortnight, I left Mash-had for Teheran, travelling by ordinary marches along the great Persian post-road. This road is so well known that I need not here give any account of it.

When I was at Mahomadabad, in Daragez, a Turkoman merchant of Merve arrived with a quantity of carpets and other goods from that town. While he was showing his goods to the Governor I happened to be present and purchased a very handsome Merve carpet from him. This merchant had a petition from a Russian prisoner in the hands of the Turkomans at Merve, begging the Governor to send him a 'poshteen' or sheepskin coat to keep him warm, and a pair of shoes. The Governor, so he told me, acceded to his request and sent them by this merchant. I asked if the prisoner would be allowed to receive a little money. The Governor replied that he would be allowed to have a small amount, but if forwarded a large sum his captor would probably confiscate it. I asked what was the most I could safely send. I should have liked to have sent a good sum to the poor fellow, but the Governor said if I forwarded more than one toman he would not receive it, so I sent that amount. I was very sorry indeed not to do more. This prisoner was a Russian private, but when he was captured he had told the Turkomans that he was a Russian officer—a Major. This story had led to much trouble for him, as the Turkomans naturally demanded a very large ransom for officers, while if he had confessed he was a private, they

would only have asked a small sum, which probably would have been paid, but by calling himself a major, he seriously diminished his chances of being set free. I heard that he was very badly used by his captor, as he was tortured by having red-hot coals placed on his naked stomach to induce him to send piteous appeals to the Russians begging that he might be ransomed. The whole question of the treatment of their captives whether Persians, or, as in this case, a European, by the Turkomans, is most urgent, and I thoroughly sympathised with the efforts of Russia to put down this dreadful slave trade. The state of thousands of Persian slaves held in Khiva, Bokhara, and amongst the Turkomans, is most pitiable, and in reality far worse than that of African slaves. These poor Persians, who are a civilised people, are torn from their homes, and, in many cases, delicate and well-born women are carried off into the most ruthless slavery, and subjected to the most brutal treatment.

On arrival at Teheran, I called both on Sir Ronald Thomson, the English Minister, and Mr Zinovief, the Russian Minister, whom I had known on my previous visit. I returned to England through Baku on the Caspian, and reached London on Sunday, 24th April, 1881. I read a paper\* before the Geographical Society on my journey across the Kavir, or great Persian Salt Desert, which very few Europeans had hitherto crossed, and also concerning my visit to Daragez.

\* Reprinted in Appendix by kind permission of the Society.

## CHAPTER XII

### ACROSS THE DESERT TO KHAF

AFTER remaining a few months in England, I went out again to Persia in August 1881, on special duty on the Perso-Afghan frontier, with residence at Khaf close to the Afghan boundary. I travelled through Russia to Teheran, which I left on the 22nd of October, to take up my appointment. After engaging a "mirza," or secretary, named Askar Ali Khan, I started with as little impedimenta as possible, having only six baggage animals, two horses for myself, and one horse each for my "mirza" and servants. The first day I travelled eighteen miles and stopped at the post-station. Next day, being Sunday, I halted, and on the following day, the 24th March, I marched twenty-seven miles to Aiwan-i-Kaif. The post-horse station being in a very dilapidated condition I could not stop there, and as there was no caravanseri at Aiwan-i-Kaif, I had to be content with a very dirty house. The water here was brackish.

On the 25th I marched to Kishlak, twenty-one miles. On the 26th I went to Deh Namak, a small village with two good caravanseri and a post-horse

station. On the 27th I marched to Lasgird, twenty-five miles, where there is both a post-horse station and a caravanseri. Lasgird is a very curious form of village of which there are several in this part of the country. It originally had a thick wall round it, but it and the interior of the village had been reduced to ruins by some conqueror, and the new village constructed on the top of the wall, while the centre part had been more or less filled in. An entrance to the village had been made a good way up the wall, and this, the only one, was closed by a gigantic boulder which could be rolled aside when necessary. The houses built on the top of the wall had doors opening on to balconies which were not protected in any way, the height of the lower tier of houses being about thirty feet from the ground, and the highest probably seventy-five feet. A man I spoke to said one night his little child woke up suddenly, ran out on to the balcony and fell over. The mother and father hurried down as quickly as possible, rolled away the boulder near the doorway, and found the child below unhurt. The child probably fell from one tier of balconies on to the next and so on, a distance of at least thirty feet from the lowest tier. The man said "God sent His angel and preserved the child from harm." No doubt the child had an almost miraculous escape, and what the man said was strictly true in the sense that God sent His angel to save the child, but he added that a man in white like an angel was seen going away. I asked him if he had seen the angel. He said no, not he himself, but someone else had. The Persians, like most orientals, love to embroider a story, so when



the child had this miraculous escape, the appearance of the angel was added.

On the 28th October, I marched to the town of Samnan, distance twenty-two miles. I put up in a nice clean caravanseri, which had an upper room, or 'balahkaneh,' with one side of the chamber left open to the air. Here I met some pilgrims from Afghanistan, who had been to the shrine of Kerbala, near Bagdad. Two of them were Hazarahs, one of whom had been a contractor for the road we had made over the Khojak Pass near Kandahar. He had letters from several English officers for whom he had worked. He said he had been spending the money he had thus earned in making pilgrimages to Kerbala, and also that his own tribe, the Hazarahs, had suffered much from the Afghans after the British left Kandahar, because they had been friendly to the British. There were also many Heratis who had been on the pilgrimage to Kerbala, and these men were most anxious for news from Herat, but I had no later information than they had. They told me they feared Abdul Rhaman Khan's troops, who had lately entered Herat, very much, as the Heratis, being mostly of Persian race, were not friendly to the Afghans.

I saw a very amusing and well-drawn picture of a steam-engine executed on the wall of my room by a Persian artist, and I should have doubted anyone being capable of drawing a locomotive so well, who had never seen one. But the draughtsman evidently had not done so, as his steam-engine was drawn by a team of horses! At this time there was no railway in Persia.

I was told there was a place, considerably to the southward of Samnan, named Kuhzir, where there are gold mines which were worked in ancient times, but are now abandoned. They were said to be five "fursakhs" from Husen Nun, which is marked on the maps. A place named Rhasin is said to be one "fursakh" or so beyond Kuhzir, but not in the direction of Husen Nun. All these places are in the Sharud district of Persia. Rhasin is, I have no doubt, marked in the maps as Rishin, with the remark "palms but bearing no fruit." Of course the palm trees, especially date palms, will grow in countries far to the north of where they would bear fruit. Date palms to bear fruit require a very hot climate indeed, and a single frost in the winter will prevent their bearing fruit for several years afterwards.

On the road from Resht I met Lieutenant-Colonel Suleyman Khan of the Persian Engineers. He had been sent by the Shah to visit these deserted gold mines, and stated that he had been there for some time, but his report must have been unfavourable as nothing was done. I know of three places in Persia where gold was formerly worked. One near Zenjan, which I have visited, the second near Mash-had, and this place Kuhzir, but I do not think it would pay to work any of them now, any more than the mines which were worked in Egypt in ancient times, and even later. Formerly kings were able to obtain gold by the labour of captives taken in war, who were forced to work without any wage, but were merely fed, the gold more than paying for their keep, whereas, now that wages have to be paid,

these mines could only be worked at a loss. I met a man in this neighbourhood who told me he knew all about the mines at Kuhzir, and said that by spending ten tomans on labour you would probably obtain only nine tomans worth of gold, so it was not a paying transaction.

I left Samnan on the 29th of October and marched to Gurmab, distance thirteen miles.

At Gurmab were the remains of a ruined caravan-seri, and a spring of good water and four houses situated close to the "kavir." Supplies even for my small party were procured with difficulty, but I had fortunately brought from Khelas, a village which I passed some four miles from Samnan, the grain I required for my horses and mules, so I only wanted a little bread for my men and chaff for the animals.

The next day, the 30th October, being Sunday I halted, and on the 31st marched to Taglag. Here there was a spring of sweet water in the desert and a ruined tower, but no inhabitants. On the 1st November, I marched to Husainabad, a village in the Damghan district, and about four 'fursakhs' from the town of Damghan. Near Husainabad are the ruins of a large city covering a great extent of country, proving it to have been a place of considerable importance. Several men were engaged in hunting for curiosities amongst the mounds which mark the site of the various buildings. The soil in which the ancient town was situated is very sandy, and almost all traces, beyond these mounds, are obliterated, but coins, pieces of faience, and pottery are occasionally unearthed.

On the 2nd October I struck across the "kavir" for some miles after leaving Husainabad, and passed the ruins of this ancient town, the name of which, so the natives told me, had been Komesh, the capital of the Kaian dynasty of kings. This dynasty had many celebrated kings, the most renowned having been Kai Khusru, called by the Greeks Cyrus. The sand is fast burying the few traces of the town that still remain.

After a few miles of sandy plain, I crossed a portion of real "kavir" or salt desert for a distance of three miles, then reached the skirt of a low range of hills called Panj Kuh, finally rounding the end of these hills and crossing another piece of "kavir" four or five miles in extent, when we reached a small spring of brackish water and one house. The distance from Husainabad was twenty-two miles. I brought with me food for my men and horses, and even some water for myself. The water of this spring was decidedly brackish, but I have often drunk much worse.

The next day, the 3rd October, I made a very long march. The distance was forty-two miles, but as we lost our road, we actually travelled very much further. We first marched over an uninhabited country to three small wells, called Chah Jam, where we watered our horses and mules, and then hurried on as we had still far to go, and were anxious to get in before it grew very dark. At these wells we passed a caravan of camels which had come from Yazd and were going to Shahrud. We had started at a quarter to six in the morning and marched till 10 p.m., with only a halt of a quarter of

an hour during these sixteen hours to water the mules and horses. After this long journey we took off the loads and lay down in the wilderness, as the guide did not know where we were. I was sorry for the poor horses and mules, as there was neither food nor water for them. Early on the morning of the 4th of November we started again, and reached a small village called Doh Chah, distant only some three miles from where we had halted the night before. I was so glad to be able to procure food and water again for ourselves and our horses.

On the 5th November I made another long march to Geber, passing by Biarjumand en route, but leaving it on the left. From Biarjumand to Geber is three "fursakhs." Biarjumand is a sort of capital for this portion of desert country, and a deputy of the Governor of Shahrud lives here. But I passed on to Geber which is a more flourishing town of about 1,200 inhabitants, and consists practically of three villages, while it is celebrated for its good tobacco. All the country I had passed since I left Husainabad had no permanent inhabitants until Biarjumand was reached, a distance of eighty-five miles, with the exception of a single family at Doh Chah. But every brackish spring I passed formed the temporary pasturage of several flocks of sheep and goats, which had been brought from the mountains north of Shahrud, where they were kept in summer. These flocks are fattened during the winter about here, and on the Persian New Year's Day, the vernal equinox, all the fat ones are taken into Teheran and sold to the butchers. It was very funny to see the larger he-goats all carrying loads, the food, bedding, and

other impedimenta of the shepherds. I observed these shepherds had no women-folk with them, though when these flocks are pastured in the mountains, they are accompanied by many women. They leave their families in the mountain villages, and do not bring them down to this plain, which is sometimes swept by raiding bands of Turkomans.

Biarjumand has about 1,200 inhabitants, and together with Geber and the neighbouring villages, a total population of about 4,000, all dependent upon the Deputy-Governor of Shahrud. Geber not only produces good tobacco but even peaches and nectarines, fruits which are usually only found in more civilised places in Persia, but apricots, apples, and pears are found everywhere where there is water. At this season, however, no fruit, except melons which keep all through the winter, are procurable. The people, though perfectly civil, were very troublesome from their inquisitiveness. They said no European had ever been in Geber before, though one had, seven or eight years previously, visited Biarjumand. There are some ruins here, but not of much extent, which tradition connects with the daughter of Rustam, the Persian Hercules. Copper abounds in all these villages, and there are at least 1,000 places in this part of the country where the heaps of slag show that it was formerly smelted. I passed two such slag-heaps myself on the road; but at present the mines, having been declared a royal monopoly, are not worked. The shah, however, will neither work them himself, nor allow anyone else to do so. My guide, who was a very shrewd fellow, told me many veins of copper were worked till seven or eight years

from near Mussinabad, did not know them, and Jabal Kuh which he gave as the name of the Quartz range, is merely 'Jabal,' which is 'hill' in Arabic, and 'Kuh,' which is 'hill' in Persian. He declared that no gold had ever been worked amongst these hills, but only in the Zur Kuh, which I saw from my camp at Kargoshi on the 2nd November, and which I have shown in my map.

At twenty miles from Geber I crossed the Kal Mura river or Ab-i-Shur, Kal Mura or Ab-i-Shur both meaning the same thing, one name being Arabic and the other Persian. Both refer to the bitter taste of the water, which is not only salt, but, at the same time, very bitter, and quite undrinkable for man or beast. This is the same river as that which crosses the main post-road between Mash-had and Teheran, by the bridge known as "Pul Abrishami," or the silken bridge, so called because it was supposed to have been built by a silk merchant. There was little water in this river when I crossed it, but it bore traces of being in high flood at times. The banks were covered with tamarisk scrub which appeared to flourish in spite of the saltiness of the water, thus showing that at certain seasons the water is less salt than at others. It was much more salt where I crossed it on this occasion than it was at Pul-Abrishami where I passed it on my journey from Mash-had to Teheran.

At twenty-six miles from Geber we reached a small well of fresh water where we encamped, I having brought supplies with me.

On the 9th November we passed the ruins of a village named Bizemeh, where there was plenty of

good water and traces of recent cultivation, but, except for some cattle grazing near, the place was deserted. The villagers used to come here in the spring to cultivate some of the land, but left as soon as they had cut their crops. Formerly all this country was much harried by Turkomans, but since the Russians have occupied the Akhal Tekke country, they have kept away.

Twelve miles after passing Bizemeh the cluster of hamlets known as Tawrun is reached. This consists of eighteen small hamlets, each with a strong tower for refuge from the Turkomans. The people took me for a Russian, coming out and blessing me for rescuing them from the Turkoman raid. The hamlets were generally small and poor, and provisions, even for my small party, were procured with difficulty.

From Tawrun I marched, on the 10th of November, to Kalan Chah, a distance of sixteen miles. Kalan Chah is merely a well in the desert where the caravans halt; near it is another well, where some Baluchi nomads were encamped with their flocks, and from whom I purchased a sheep. These were the first Baluchis I had met on this journey. These Baluchis, in common with most of the Baluch tribes, pay tribute to the Amir of Kain. They were loud in their praises of the Russians, and were much surprised to hear that I was not one. They said that their chief, whom I would meet to-morrow at Anarbut, had visited the Russian camps on the Gurgan river and had been presented with a revolver.

On the 11th of November I started early as the march before me was a long one. At twenty-one miles we reached a small well of good water, named



Jahan Mulk, where we came upon a caravan proceeding with raisins and figs to Shahrud. Close to this well, as almost everywhere where there is water (and consequently wood), I found a copper smelting furnace with a quantity of slag around it, and I passed several such furnaces on the road.

At thirty-two miles I reached Kasimabad, a small village with a plentiful supply of good water from a "karez," where I halted for the night.

## CHAPTER XIII

### KHAF \*

ON the 12th November I passed the flourishing village of Anarbut. Here there were many pomegranate gardens, "anar" being Persian for pomegranate, from which the village takes its name. I was offered 26 lbs of the finest pomegranates for ninepence, but declined them as I am not fond of that fruit.

At seventeen miles I passed the village of Mozufferabad, and a little further on came to several other flourishing villages. I had now entered the Turshiz district, which is one of the richest in Persia. Kassimabad is in the Shahrud district, though situated so far from that place. At nineteen miles from Kassimabad I reached Badar Askan, where I pitched my tent in a walled enclosure, which gave my horses and mules some shelter from the bitter wind that was blowing.

On the 14th November, after an early start, I passed the village of Kundar, at ten and a half miles, where I struck the road I had travelled on last year to Sultanabad but, as I did not propose to visit Sultanabad (being out of my route) I left

\* For route see smaller map of the Afghan and Persian Border,

it, and after twenty-six miles reached the village of Nagabad. The people were not very civil here, but I at last found a fairly sheltered place in which to pitch my tent. Food was very cheap in this village, and for three shillings I procured as much barley and chaff as five horses and six mules could eat. Whenever one leaves the main roads in Persia, food generally becomes much cheaper.

On the 15th November I left the more fruitful part of the Turshiz district, travelling over a rather desolate country, and at eight miles from Nagabad entered a pass between a low range of hills, a continuation of the Kuh Begou range. Here we crossed a small stream with steep banks covered with grass and bushes. At twenty-two miles we reached Faizabad, a tolerably flourishing place, almost important enough to be called a small town. This district is called Mahwilat. My road here crossed the route followed by the mission of Sir F. Goldsmid on its return journey from Seistan to Mash-had. This mission stayed at Abdulabad, which can be seen from Faizabad. I stayed in a caravanseri, and was very glad of the shelter it afforded both to men and horses, as the weather was bitterly cold, and the horses, though well covered up, could get no rest at night in the open, because of the biting wind which always seemed to blow. I had a good deal of trouble at this time with my mirza, Askar Ali Khan, as he was unwell, and used to cry dreadfully whenever he suffered pain. He was a very poor creature, and had never before left his mother. Though Persians are generally such good horsemen, he rode very badly and was afraid of his horse,

although it was a quiet one. He used to dine with me, but complained very much of the cook, with whom I was perfectly satisfied. He also declared he could not get on without drinking spirits every day, but I had none with me. He was always afraid of robbers or something, and was a thorough coward. On one occasion he had a slight touch of fever, when he behaved in the most extraordinary way, cursing himself and his father in a dreadful manner.

From Faizabad I went thirteen miles to Khynabad, where we found that, though we were in the right direction for Khaf, we were not on the direct road to that place, and if we continued on we should get no water for seven firsakhs. I therefore went to Bushruweyah, a small village near the direct road from Turbat-Hidari to Khaf. Bushruweyah is fifteen miles from Khynabad, so the total distance was twenty-eight miles altogether, but we had actually travelled a good deal further as we had wandered quite three or four miles out of our road.

I passed the night at Khynabad in an old caravanseri built by Shah Abbas, a very handsome building, but partly in ruins. At Khynabad, the village was so dirty that I encamped outside. A great deal of poppy is grown about here for opium. When I told the people the price of opium in China had greatly fallen, they declared they were delighted, as they were forced by the owner of the village to grow opium, which pays him best, but the actual cultivator preferred to grow wheat.

On the 17th November I left Bushruweyah, and after going about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles across country without

any road, we reached a village named Dehna. Here we struck a broad road leading to Khaf. Though no longer necessary, I took on my guide, a mason named Agha Baba, who proved to be a very good fellow and who stayed with me for a week after my arrival at Khaf, and helped me to put my house in order.

From Dehna the country was thickly populated, villages being passed every few miles. I saw two villages, the whole population of which had been carried off by the Turkomans some three years ago, and one of them, about which I made particular enquiries, had a very instructive history. The people had quitted these strongly fortified villages in which they had formerly resided, and, believing more peaceful times had arrived, built their houses outside, and allowed the fort to go to ruin. But a large body of Turkomans numbering, it was said, 1500 men, appeared in their neighbourhood for a couple of days, raided these two villages and killed four men, while everyone else, man, woman, and child, was carried away into slavery. It is not surprising that the Russians, who have almost entirely stopped this raiding, are looked upon as deliverers, but it is very disgraceful to the Persian Government that Turkomans should have been able to raid so far into Persia. Of course, in Daragez and in the parts of Persia adjacent to the Turkoman territory, there was some difficulty in preventing these raids, but any captives taken from here must have been carried 250 miles before they reached any place inhabited by Turkomans, and must have crossed several mountain passes which could easily

have been guarded by a small body of troops. There are a number of cavalry kept up, or supposed to be kept up, by the different chiefs, but they never act together, and until the Russians appeared on the scene, the Turkomans made their raids, sometimes, even 500 miles within the Persian frontier with perfect impunity, and returned in triumph to their camps on the Murghab, bringing thousands of sheep and hundreds of cattle with them. The Kurds and Turks of Daragez do sometimes attack these raiding bands, but I do not think the Turkomans were ever really attacked by the Persians belonging to this part of the country. The most they ever do is to cause a raiding party to drop a small portion of their plunder. The Turkomans have however, a nasty habit of killing, or at least mutilating, their captives, if they are too hotly pursued.

At 14½ miles I passed Nasrabad, a large village strongly fortified with both wall and ditch. It is sometimes called Balah Khaf, to distinguish it from the other Khaf which is called Rui Khaf. The country here is chiefly occupied by the Taimuri tribes, who are "Iliats" or Tent-dwellers. Only a portion of these Taimuri are settled in houses, the rest living in tents pitched outside, and moving constantly in search of pasture.

On the 18th November I encamped at Salami and pitched my tent inside the fortified village as I thought some of the Baluchi nomads, who were encamped in the neighbourhood, might take a fancy to my horses or mules. Salami is said to be so named because, in the time of the Usbeg kings, the people used to come here to salaam to them.

On the 19th November I left Salami, sending on my "mirza" and one servant to Dervish Ali Khan, the governor of Rui Khaf, asking him to make over a house for my occupation. The Governor sent out his cousin, Mortuzza Khan, with a dozen horsemen, amongst whom was the head man of the Hindoo traders settled at Khaf. I received every attention, and a house was provided for me at Lag, where I was asked to remain one day until a house could be found for me at Rui Khaf.

The next day being Sunday, I halted at Lag, and on the 21st entered Rui Khaf, accompanied by an escort of cavalry sent to meet me, and all the Hindoo traders who were settled at Khaf, sixteen in number. I was conducted to my quarters, which were quite the best the town could furnish, though not very grand. They consisted of a small courtyard with three rooms built round it; then there was an immense palace of a place, partly in ruins, built round another courtyard, all floored with bricks with a large tank for water in the middle. This was a typical Persian palace, although somewhat in ruins. The part in ruins was intended for my servants and horses, while the smaller courtyard with the three rooms, which were in fair repair, was for myself. I occupied one room as a bed and sitting-room, the other to receive visitors in, and the third as a kitchen. The rooms were mere open sheds, but the two better ones were provided with wooden shutters to close them, which, however, did not fit by several inches, so the rooms were at least airy. The third room, used as a kitchen, was without a door, and had a stream of water running through it. Being winter time, it was rather

cold with hard frosts at night, and we expected snow. The room I used to receive visitors in had a good Persian carpet, and felts for reclining round the edge of the room. Over the felt was spread some blue stuff, such as window curtains are made of in England, so that the general effect was good. There were fireplaces with chimneys in each room, but no furniture—no ordinary Persian house ever has any. I had, however, brought a small iron bedstead and a small folding table, about 20 ins. square, so that I really was very comfortable, and Dervish Ali Khan had given me the very best he had. I asked when I should call upon him; he most courteously said he would call upon me. He came about an hour after my arrival, accompanied by his elder brother who generally resided at Nasrabad, but who was here on a visit. A younger brother also came with him. I liked Dervish Ali Khan who has, I think, a good face. After about an hour, they went away. I found that the family of Ayub Khan were here, having arrived in their flight from Herat, which had been lately occupied by the troops of the Amir Abdul Rhaman Khan under his cousin Abdul Kudus Khan. Ayub Khan was himself at Gisik, 24 firsakhs from this place, in the Kain district of Persia, accompanied by 900 of his most faithful followers, who had fled with him from Khandahar. I could see that Dervish Ali Khan did not wish him to come, because he was afraid that something might happen to me which would bring discredit on himself, and secondly, because he had no force here with which to keep in order the 900 unruly Afghans with Ayub Khan, and lastly, because he would have had to feed them all for at



least two days, which would have cost him a good deal of money. Under these circumstances, he hoped that Ayub would not come here. He sent to me privately to say he had dispatched horsemen to bring him news of Ayub's movements, and when he came near, he would leave the town on a shooting excursion, and asked if I would accompany him. I said I would do so, as I could see he was anxious lest any harm should happen to me in consequence of the arrival of this remnant of Ayub Khan's beaten troops from Khandahar. I believed him to be perfectly friendly, as he had nothing to gain by meeting Ayub Khan, a fugitive without power. About forty of Ayub's followers were in attendance on his wives, who were not at all pleased because Dervish Ali Khan had turned them out of these rooms and given them to me, but I did not know this for some time afterwards.

On the 14th of December Dervish Ali Khan said he was going to his district, as he did not wish to meet Ayub Khan, and begged me to accompany him. I went with him to Mangab, a village about 15 miles off, the land of which was his private property. No doubt in summer it would be pleasant enough, for though there are no trees, there is some grass, which is rare enough in Persia to be something remarkable. This place had been deserted during the famine, and was now being re-built and re-populated. Dervish Ali Khan had built himself rather a nice upper-roomed house, but it had as yet no door nor windows, so it was bitterly cold. On the road we saw a good many hares, but my two greyhounds were unable to catch them, as they had grown rather fat from want

of exercise during the month I had been at Khaf. The Khan very kindly gave me the only room which had a fire-place; there was no door, but a piece of blue calico hung across it which was insufficient to keep the wind out, as it was considerably shorter than the doorway. The window had a shutter so I could close that. The people who had built the chimney had evidently had no idea of its use, as they had very carefully plastered up the hole leading into it, so that when a fire was lit the whole of the smoke came into the room. However, we soon broke a hole through and the chimney then acted. I had my meals with the Khan, who was a very gentlemanly and enlightened man, and who had left his comfortable home on my account.

We stayed at this place till the 18th. The Khan tried the double-barrel breech-loading gun I had given him. First he tried it on a cock, which was perched on top of a house, and then on a teal; both shots were successful, so he was pleased both with the gun and me. I had also given him a revolver of the latest pattern, which also delighted him. Ayub Khan did not arrive at Rui Khaf until the 17th. I think it was as well that I had left the town, as they abused my servants and danced round them threatening them with knives. They also broke open the sort of ruined palace in which my horses were stabled, and were ejected with difficulty by the Khan's servants. Ayub Khan was very anxious to stay at Khaf until after the 22nd of March, the Persian new year's day. Khaf being close to the Afghan border, it was a convenient place from which to intrigue with Herat. His

friends declared he had 2,000 more followers scattered about, that he had promises of help if he appeared before Herat, and that one of the gates of the citadel would be secretly opened to him. Dervish Ali Khan gave orders that after six days no more food should be supplied to him or his retinue. Ayub Khan was very angry at this, and sent a very impertinent letter saying he would fight my host sooner than leave Khaf. This was mere braggadocio, for though he had about 700 followers in Khaf, and Dervish Ali Khan had but 200 mounted men, Ayub Khan would not have bettered his position by fighting, as troops could soon have been sent from Mash-had to Turbat Hidari to Dervish Ali's assistance.

Ayub Khan left on the 23rd December in high dudgeon, but many of his followers did not leave until the 25th, the day on which I returned to Khaf.

Before returning, I accompanied Dervish Ali Khan to Nasrabad where his elder brother, Rutf Ali Khan, resided. It is a large village strongly fortified, and has an "arx" or citadel which, besides the ordinary wooden gates, had an enormous stone, like a gigantic mill-stone, which could be rolled in front of the gates to protect them from being set on fire. These stones are circular and are rolled back into a hole made in the wall for them. We had to pass through several gates and dark passages before we got into the citadel, the road twisting and turning, each point being capable of defence. I found a very good house when I got inside, and was given a good room where I was most comfort-

able, remaining here until I returned to Khaf. During the time I was here, from the 18th December to the 25th, an acrimonious correspondence was proceeding between Dervish Ali Khan and Ayub Khan, and I expect I was brought here because Ali Khan thought I would not be safe at Mangab, which was not fortified.

When I left Nasrabad I gave Dervish Ali Khan a good watch but he was very unwilling to accept it.

Persians are very celebrated as narrators of stories. While I was at Khaf, there was a renowned story-teller, for whom I used to send in the many dull evenings I spent there alone, to amuse me. One of these, called the Arab and the Snake, I will here narrate :—

The sort of leading idea of the narrative was that men always return evil to animals and plants for the good they do to men. An Arab was riding his camel along the road, Arab-like with his long spear in his hand, when he saw some brush-wood on fire. When he came near it, he saw that a large snake had been encircled by the fire, and was about to be burnt to death. The snake called out, "Oh, Arab, do save me!" The Arab, having approached the fire, placed the nosebag of his camel on the end of his spear, reached it over the fire to the snake, which crept inside it, when the Arab lifted him over the fire, and set him free. The snake immediately said, "Oh, Arab, which is it to be, yourself or your camel? because I must bite one of the two." The Arab answered, "Oh, that is very hard, and you wish to take the life of either myself or my camel." The snake replied, "I must do so,

because men always return evil to animals for the good that animals do them." The Arab replied, "It is not the case that men do reward evil to animals for the good they do them. We will ask the opinion of the first three things we meet."

When they had gone a little further, they met a lion who was lame and wounded. The snake said at once, "Oh lion, tell me true, do not men reward evil to animals for the good they do them?" "Yes," said the lion, "it is perfectly true. There was a man and his family who lived here, and I was quite friendly with them, I never did them any harm, but one day the man fired his gun at me, and left me wounded as you see." The snake at once said, "You hear what he says, which is it to be, yourself or your camel, I must kill one?" The Arab said, "It is not true, men do not reward evil to animals for the good they do to them. We will ask somebody else."

The snake then addressed a date-palm tree, and said, "Oh, date-palm, tell me true, do not men reward evil to animals and things for the good they do them?" "Yes," said the date-palm, "certainly, I was once a beautiful date-palm, and a man and his family lived under my shade, and ate quantities of my beautiful dates. That man cut me down, and left me a mere stump as you see." The snake at once said, "Oh, Arab, you hear what the date-palm says, which is it to be, yourself or your camel?" The Arab said, "I do not agree, we will ask somebody else." They went on a little further, till they met a fox, and the snake said, "Oh, fox, tell me true, do not men return evil to animals for

the good they do them?" The fox knew quite well that it was true that men reward evil to animals for the good they do them, but because he was a fox, he replied, "No, it is not true," hoping thereby to gain some advantage for himself. So he said to the Arab, "Tell me the whole story." The Arab said, "I saw this snake amongst some bushes surrounded by fire, and he called out to me to save him. I put the nosebag of my camel at the end of my spear and passed it over the fire, the snake crept into the nosebag, and I lifted him out of the fire." "Oh, nonsense," said the fox, "such a big snake, and such a small nosebag, how did he get in? I do not believe it. I should like to see that all done over again." So they set some bushes on fire, and the snake again crept into the nosebag, and the Arab placed him in it in the middle of the fire. "Now," said the fox to the Arab, "If you don't particularly want him, I should recommend you to leave him there." The man said to the fox, "Thank you, I will give you two fine cocks as a reward for the service you have done me." The man went home to fetch the cocks, as a reward for the fox who had done him a service, and said to his wife, "Catch two of the finest cocks, put them into a bag and give them to me, and I will take them to the fox." The woman pretended to do what she was told, but she said to herself, "Give two of the finest cocks to that horrid fox who is always eating my chickens; no, indeed I won't." She proceeded to catch the house-dog and tied him up in the sack, and gave it to her husband instead of the two cocks. The man thought, as he carried

the sack to give it to the fox, they must indeed be fine cocks, they were so heavy. The man when he reached the fox said, "I have brought you two fine cocks." He then opened the bag, out jumped the dog, and killed the fox. The fox said, as he was dying, "I knew what the snake said was true, that men do reward evil to animals for the good they do them, and it has come true in my case."

While on the subject of anecdotes, it may not be out of place to here give some further typical Persian stories.

#### PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

A STORY which is often illustrated in Persian pictures, and of which I have a copy, is well known under this name.

A certain Shah of Persia, who was a wonderful archer, and very proud of his shooting, had a beautiful wife. One day he took his wife out to see him shoot. Presently seeing an antelope in the distance scratching its ear with its foot, he said, "I will nail that antelope's foot to its ear with my arrow." He fired, and did so. The courtiers all exclaimed, "Wonderful!" The lady replied, "That is nothing; you are always practising shooting, and practice makes perfect." The Shah was so vexed at his shooting being disparaged, that he divorced the lady on the spot. A few years afterwards, he heard there was a beautiful young lady who used every day to carry a full grown ox upstairs to her bedroom on her shoulders. The Shah attended with his Court to see this wonderful sight, and found it to be quite true. He said to the young lady, "How



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can you manage to carry a full-grown ox on your shoulders." The young lady replied, "That is nothing. I purchased this ox some four years ago, when it was a little calf, and I have carried it upstairs every day since. You see it is a case of practice making perfect. As the calf grew so did my strength increase." The Shah recognised the lady as his late wife, and was so pleased with her cleverness that he remarried her.

#### THE IDLE YOUNG MAN

THERE was an idle young man who would do no work, and his mother was always trying to persuade him to obtain some employment, but he would do nothing for her. The old lady, in great despair, consulted a lady friend, who said, "I will give my daughter in marriage to your son, and though he will not work for his mother, he *will* for his young wife." As soon as he was married, his wife said to him, "You must obtain some employment or how am I to live?" He said, "I know no trade." She replied, "There is a rice-pounding machine in the yard, and you have only to step upon it to raise the lever, and pound rice; if you keep stepping on it all day the lever will keep falling, and you will pound a quantity of rice, which can be sold." He carried out her wishes, and brought home the money to his wife. She said, "Thank you, *this* will give me bread, but I want much more than bread. I require silk dresses; you must do something more." He said, "What can I do?" She replied, "You can be a night watchman; I can get you a place at once. All you have to do is to keep awake at night, and

perambulate the streets, calling out the hours." So the poor man was obliged not only to work all day at the most laborious employment, but to keep awake all night, yet to please his young wife he was ready to do it.

The moral of this is, that a man is more ready to please his wife than his mother.

#### THE COBBLER ASTROLOGER

A CERTAIN cobbler, who lived at Ispahan and was no longer young, married a young and ambitious wife. She was not at all satisfied with her position as a cobbler's wife, but wished to be a fine lady, and gave out that her husband was a noted astrologer, and could foretell events. The news of this astrologer reached the ears of the Shah's daughter, who, having lost her jewels, one day when the cobbler had brought her some shoes which he had repaired, told him the story of her loss, and asked him to tell her where the jewels were. While the poor man was meditating very unhappily on the difficulty of his position, he saw a rent in the Princess's skirt, and said, "Look at the rent," to call her attention to it. The Princess said at once "You are quite right; when I went to the bath, I did place my jewels in the rent in the wall of the bathroom," and she went there and found her jewels. She gave a large reward to the cobbler, and it was noised abroad what a wonderful astrologer the old man was. Amongst others, the Shah heard the story.

Shortly afterwards a robbery took place in the palace, the thieves having carried off a large part



"PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT"—II.



of the Shah's treasures. The cobbler was sent for, and the Shah told him that he must tell him the names of the robbers, and enable him to capture them, and obtain the return of his jewels, that if he did not do so within forty days, he would be executed. The poor cobbler went home in utter despair, and told his young wife this story, saying, "See what you have done for me by saying I am an astrologer." The cobbler, to keep count of the number of days he had to live, put forty date-fruits into a jar, and determined to eat one every evening. That night, before going to bed, he took the jar, ate one date, and said, "That is one, and there are thirty-nine left." The robbers had heard of the Shah's threat, and one of them was outside watching. When he heard the cobbler say, "*There* is one, and there are thirty-nine remaining," he thought that the cobbler was an astrologer, and had discovered there were forty thieves engaged in the robbery; so he went and told the story to his comrades, and said, "The astrologer knows all about it, come one of you and listen with me to-morrow." So the next night two robbers were listening, when the cobbler, before going to bed, ate the second date, and said, "*There* are two, and there are thirty-eight left," the robbers were convinced that he knew all about them. The following night there were three of the robbers watching, and when they heard the cobbler say, "There are three, and thirty-seven are left," they became more than ever convinced that the cobbler was an astrologer, and before the forty days were finished, they felt sure that the cobbler knew all about it, and would inform the Shah, so

they thought it best to confess their crime to the cobbler, and tell the whole story, and where the treasure was concealed.

The cobbler informed the Shah, who seized the treasure, and rewarded the cobbler magnificently.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ON THE AFGHAN FRONTIER

ON Christmas day I returned with Dervish Ali Khan to Rui Khaf, and on the road we met some of the followers of Ayub Khan, who had proceeded to Mash-had. A cousin of his, Sirdar Mahomed Hassan Khan, remained at Khaf with about seventy followers, who were a much quieter set of men than those of Ayub Khan. Some of these men came to me for medicine, and I found that one of them had been shot through the neck, the ball entering at the back of the neck and coming out just under the jaw, with the result that it had destroyed the hearing of the left ear. I treated him for dysentery from which he was also suffering, though he was most anxious I should treat him for his deafness for which, of course, I could do nothing. It was curious that these Afghans, who had been fighting our troops only a short time before, and murdering our officers, should trust themselves to a British officer for medical aid. They would not have done so with their own countrymen. Sirdar Mahomed Hassan Khan left with his followers for Mash-had to join Ayub Khan, and his father



Surtip Nur Mahomed Khan left for Birjand and Seistan, accompanied by fifty-two women and nine men. Rui Khaf became very quiet after the departure of these unruly Afghans.

On the 14th March I went to Karat, a small but strong fort on the borders of the Khaf district, situated twenty-two miles from Khaf, through the Karat pass in the Bakharz hills. Up to the seventeenth mile all the streams drain towards Khaf; beyond that they drain to the Hari Rud, or Herat river. On approaching Karat, the first thing one sees is the "mille" of Karat. This is a very lofty minaret, which leans considerably from the perpendicular in the same way as the leaning tower of Pisa. It was formerly the minaret of a mosque which stood here, but which has now disappeared, though this handsome minaret still remains. The ground near it is quite hollow and, no doubt, some of the foundations of the mosque could be found. Near the minaret are ruins of what must have been at one time a fairly large town. I found a slab of marble on which there had been an inscription, but now it only contained fragments of words. Such words as I could make out were "Ghuri" and "Lanut," which means "Curse." I have little doubt that, when complete, it had contained a curse by Mahomed Ghuri, the great conqueror, against anyone who should destroy the mosque, but the inscription was too incomplete to make any sense out of it.

On the 15th I rode out to the little village of Farizneh, the last inhabited place in Persia towards Afghanistan. From here I had a good view of "Sang Dukhtur" or the Virgin's Stone. This is

a large stone about seven feet high placed on the top of a hill, situated sixteen miles from Ghurian in Afghanistan, and is said to have been placed there by a young lady, who must have been an athletic young person, as an elephant couldn't have carried it.

· On the 16th of March I went to Karez, where there was a small cavalry outpost of seventeen men. I stayed the night here, and the next day went five and a half miles to the new village of Mohsinabad, which is strongly fortified and contains 1750 inhabitants, where Mir Pang Yusuf Khan Hazara, chief of the Persian district of Bakharz, resided.

· On the 20th March I rode out to the Hari Rud river, and went to the caravanserai of Taman Agha, situated on the western bank of the river, continued about four miles down stream beyond Taman Agha, and then returned to Mohsinabad. The next day I left Mohsinabad and went viâ Mashad-i-Riza to Khajeh, where I stayed in the house of a Herati Syud, a strong partisan of Ayub Khan.

On the 22nd of March I went back to Rui Khaf by the Sheja pass, a difficult road, the distance being twenty miles. It snowed a little as I went over the pass, as it had also done the previous day.

On the 13th of April I visited a very fine "medresseh," or college, at Kharjird, about three miles from Khaf. The whole interior of the college had been lined with most beautiful faience, and great pains must have been taken in gilding and enriching it. This faience was not, as is usual in Persia, on separate bricks or tiles, but was burnt and gilt on

a plaster of very hard gypsun. It was therefore very difficult to detach, and this, no doubt, accounted for its good preservation. The outside of the college was rather ruined and dilapidated, but the inside was in a fairly complete state. This "medresseh," or college, was built by Bahadur Khan apparently in the year A.H. 747,\* corresponding to A.D. 1346. The inscription said "The superintendent of the building was named Mahomed Khafi," and I certainly approve of Mahomed Khafi's good taste. The faience inside is said to be exactly similar to that in the mosque of Gour Shahd, the wife of Amir Timur, at Mash-had, which is considered by Shiah Mahommedans to be one of the most beautiful buildings in existence.

There are many firs in the neighbourhood of Khaf, which is thereby rather distinguished, as firs are very rare in Persia. I think they were what we call Scotch firs.

While I was stationed at Rui Khaf, I rode out eighteen miles south to a small village named Zuzan, where I found the ruins of a large town covering a great extent of ground, and amongst which men

\* *i.e.*, the Mohammedan era, dating from the flight ("Hijrah") of Mahomet from Mecca in A.D. 622. The Moslem calendar was instituted by the Khalif Omar, seventeen years later, and is reckoned from July 15, A.D. 622. The Mohammedan year consists of twelve lunar months, each commencing with the new moon (approximately), so that they do not fall in the same season with respect to the sun, but retrograde through all the seasons in about thirty-three years, the number of days in each year being only 354 against 365 in the Christian calendar. To find, therefore, the year of the Christian era equivalent to any Mohammedan date, deduct three per cent from the A.H., and add 621.54 to the result. Thus, take the above A.H. 747:—

747	747	724.59
3	22.41	621.54
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
22.41	724.59	1346.13

were busily digging up the soil and washing it for the purpose of extracting saltpetre. In the ruins of most towns saltpetre exists, and is very generally collected. I went over the ruins of Zuzan with an old man, who said his ancestors had been resident there for many generations, and that it had been the capital of Persia in ancient times. He also pointed out to me the ruins of former fortifications. A portion was, he said, called "The New Palace," and had been built by the Kaian dynasty of Persian kings, but this did not convey much information as almost all ancient buildings in Persia are attributed to this dynasty, to which belonged Cyrus, who is known to Persians as Kai Khusru. The ruins covered a very considerable area of ground, and the fortifications were quite traceable, and all, except some modern ones, were of unburnt brick. It is curious how very few ruins are found in Persia built of burnt bricks, only in very ancient buildings do they appear to have been used. It would seem the art of burning bricks had at one time been known in Persia and then become lost.

My guide showed me what he called the "red garden," where he said the whole population, men, women, and children, were led out and slaughtered by Chingiz Khan, adding that nothing would grow now on that site. The old man was very much disgusted when I remarked that Chingiz Khan himself had never been in Persia, but was appeased when I told him that Zuzan might very likely have been destroyed by his son, Tului Khan, acting on his father's order, in A.D. 1220-21.

After Zuzan was destroyed by the Mongols it was partly rebuilt by the descendants of Amir Timur,

and the present fort of burnt brick is evidently of the Timuride period. A large and handsome mosque, decorated with coloured tiles, is also of this period, and was probably built by Shah Rukh, son of Timur. There was a date inscribed on the building, but unfortunately I could not decipher it. The roof had fallen in only a few weeks previous to my arrival at Zuzan. I tried to purchase some coins but the people digging for saltpetre declared they never found any, though I did not believe their statements. Such cruel laws still exist in Persia on the subject of treasure trove, that any one discovering anything, and even giving it up to the local governor, is ruined, as he is accused of having found much more than he gave up, and of having concealed it, and the matter generally ends in the poor wretch being beaten, and his property confiscated. I did secure a few good coins in this part of Persia, but these were almost always purchased from goldsmiths in small towns. The best of them was a "daric" or "stater" of king Darius, which I believe is the oldest Persian coin. Every year an immense number of gold and silver coins, which would be priceless to collectors, are melted down in Persia.

Zuzan is probably the spot mentioned by Arrian under the name of Susia as the meeting-place of Alexander the Great and Sartebarzanes the Governor of Aria. The desolation wrought in these lands by the Mongol armies in the 13th century has never yet been effaced. I was assured that in the neighbourhood of Zuzan itself seventy different underground canals, which had formerly been used for bringing water down from the hills, can even now

be traced, whilst to-day only three or four are kept in good repair and capable of being used.

A few miles beyond Zuzan is a range of hills of considerable elevation, called Kyberkuh, and another range, called Kwaja-Shahaz-Kuh, also rises to a high attitude. The highest peak of Kwaja-Shahaz-Kuh, where there is a shrine visited from afar by pilgrims, was deeply covered with snow, though the weather in the plains below was very hot, and the time of year was the end of April. I was not able to take the height of this peak, but it is probably not less than 8,000 feet.

I passed through the Ahinguran range by a stony and disagreeable pass, and after several days' march through a hilly country reached the town of Birjand, where the Amir of Kain, Mir Alam Khan, resided. He governed  $9\frac{1}{2}$  "baluks" (or counties) of Persia, Sistan being one of these counties. He was a powerful chief and had great local authority.

The Shah had left the Amir of Kain more independence than he allowed the other chiefs of Khorasan. Formerly the seat of Government was at Kain, but it was removed to Birjand.

The whole of the northern portion of the country of the Amir of Kain is very mountainous. The mountains are not generally lofty, the highest peak being only about 8,000 feet, but the whole country lies at a high level, very little of the northern part being much below 4,000 feet, while a considerable portion rises to 5,000 feet. At one of my camps, not on a mountain, the height of the village was 6,500 feet.

Tobacco, poppy for opium, cotton and saffron are

very largely grown; the crocus blossom which supplies saffron grows better in the Kain district than anywhere else, and fetches a higher price than that produced elsewhere, with the exception of the saffron from Kashmir. When I was in Birjand saffron was selling at about five shillings an ounce, but this is nearly three times the usual price, which is generally only two shillings an ounce.

A much larger proportion of the population are engaged in manufactures than is usual in other parts of Khorasan, as in many villages there are numerous carpet manufactories which employ a number of hands, notably at Durukhs, near which place I passed, and at Gask, which I also visited. The carpets of Kain are very brilliant in colour and fine in quality, but they are dyed with aniline dyes, and much cotton is mixed with the wool of which they are made, so that these carpets do not last like the superior Persian carpets made in former times. Kurk, a stuff made of the fine underwool of the goat and known in India as "Pashmina," is largely manufactured and exported to Afghanistan and India.

I remained at Rui Khaf from the 22nd of March until the 13th of April, when I marched south to Sangun, eleven miles.\* The fort of Sangun had very lofty walls, and would be a difficult place to take without artillery. The head man was a cousin of Dervish Ali Khan, and though I believe orders had been sent to him to treat me hospitably, he never came to see me, or took any notice of me,

\* This Sangun must not be confused with the place of the same name north-west of Khaf on the road to Mash-had. [B. S.]

as is often the case in Persia. In the evening a small quantity of chaff and some wood were sent to me, but I refused to receive it, as I felt it was merely sent to ward off the anger of Dervish Ali Khan, and there was not enough chaff to feed my horses. In the morning I called upon the chief man in the place, which made me very late in getting off, and I only did this because he happened to be a relative of Dervish Ali Khan, who had been so very civil to me. The head man declared he had not known of my arrival the day before, but this was simply untrue.

On the 14th of April I marched from Sangun to Muznabad, distance seventeen miles. This day I passed the village of Behdadun, where a panic was caused by our arrival. The people who were working in the fields, mistaking us for Turkomans, took refuge in the village, while the inhabitants manned the walls.

At fifteen miles the village of Krian was passed on the right, and soon after the village of Hus-sainabad, then the village of Muznabad. Here I met with great hospitality, the "khet-khoda" (or head-man) bringing me provisions and refusing payment. He told me this was done by order of Dervish Ali Khan. I did not like this, but in the morning a present was accepted which squared accounts. The khet-khoda had been a prisoner at Khala Kushid Khan for nine years, and had only last year obtained his release. He was astonished to find how much I knew of that place, and of the principal people who inhabited it. People who had been prisoners there never know anything about it, as they passed their time chained up.



On the 15th of April I marched to a village named Fundukht, a small place situated in the Kain district, distance twenty-four miles; heretofore I had been in the Khaf district. At this time of year the whole country looks green and pleasant to the eye. To-day there was a good deal of sand, and towards the end some sand-hills, the snow and rain we had in the winter having covered the country with a coating of grass, but I can understand that in the autumn the country between Muznabad and Fundukht would be very desolate. The village is situated at the foot of a high range of hills named Kuh Kwaja Shahaz. Fundukht was a poor little village, and as the inhabitants refused to sell us anything at a reasonable price, I had to send back to Bohnabad to purchase grain and chaff. Fundukht lies at an attitude of 3,500 feet, and immediately behind it towers a high mountain, which, though the heat was great in the plain, was still covered with snow. I was told that at the top of this hill was a small plain with two springs of water and two shrines, one called Kwaja Shahaz, and the other Sultan Suleyman.

On the road between Muznabad, the last village in the Khaf district, and Bohnabad, the first in the Kain district, are two "haoz," or tanks of good water, which, so it is said, very seldom dry up. In the afternoon a young specimen of "*capra bezoartica*," or Persian ibex, was brought to me which had been shot, but it did not contain any "bezoar stone"\* which is only found, I believe, in very old animals,

\* "Bezoar" is a concretion found in the stomachs of goats or antelopes, and other herbiferous animals, generally having for its nucleus some small indigestible substance which has been taken into the stomach. The better-known name of this species is the *capra-ægagrous*. [B. S.]

and our word bezoar is evidently taken from the Persian "pad-zehr" ("against poison"). A belief is current in Persia that if a small quantity of this stone, which is not very hard, is rubbed down and mixed with a little water and swallowed, it acts as an antidote to poison, and especially to snake bites. Also, it is supposed to be a love-philter, and to cause a person to whom you are presented to fall in love with you. My "mirza," who was much interested in my enquiries after the bezoar stone, said, "Then you believe in its wonderful property?" I replied "Certainly not, but I wanted one as a curiosity."

I was interested to-day in a very little child, who kept passing and repassing my tent, following an old man who was driving a donkey laden with manure from the village to his fields. The child was a very small specimen of humanity, looking about two and a-half years old, and I was touched by the way he kept going backwards and forwards along the stony road accompanying the old man, who it appeared was his grandfather, and how devoted he was to him. His poor little shoeless feet evidently felt the stones a good deal, but he never missed accompanying the loaded donkey on its outward journey, and the grandfather always gave him a ride on its return journey. The grandfather told me the mother was dead, and that his son, the father of the child, had deserted it, having left it at a mosque, which is the Persian way of deserting children. The grandfather had adopted it as his own child, and though he had two wives, the child much preferred his grandfather. I soon made friends with the little creature by giving

him some sweeties, and the next morning he brought me two new-laid eggs in a little bag. I did not accept the eggs, but I gave him a quantity of sweeties. I felt very sorry for the little motherless boy.

On the 17th I marched to Bumrud, a village of about 400 inhabitants, strongly fortified, as all villages about here are, in consequence of the frequent Turkoman raids. Bumrud boasts a lofty, but partly ruined, mosque, two large "haoz" of water, one of which was slightly brackish, and a "kariz" (canal) which, though small, never dried up; also a fair amount of cultivation.

On the 18th I marched seven miles to Charaks, the last village in the Kain district, in the direction of Ghurian in Afghanistan. It was slightly larger than Bumrud, where I was yesterday. Far away in the desert is a small fort, named Yazdun, on the direct road from Birjand to Herat, without passing through Ghurian. The distance from Yazdun to Herat is twenty-five "firsakhs" (about ninety-five miles).

On the 19th of April I rode to the village of Yazdun. At the end of eighteen miles, a piece of "kavir" or salt desert is reached extending about four miles, but it is only skirted, though it can be seen stretching for a distance of about fifteen miles. On leaving this piece of salt desert, a permanent spring of water, called Pettargun, is reached, where the ground becomes firm again. The water in this spring was somewhat brackish, but perfectly drinkable. This brackish water, when it is not contaminated by glauber salt, is, I believe, perfectly wholesome, but makes very nasty tea. I carried no

wine nor spirits, in fact as little as possible of anything, a few small tins of Kopf's dessicated soup and a few candles being all I had, while I trusted to the country for everything else, even tea and sugar. I had only one cooked meal a day, which generally consisted of a "pilau" of rice and meat. My one other meal I used to eat going along, generally of bread (I mean, of course, the flat Persian bread) and cheese, or bread and hard-boiled eggs.

After leaving Pettargun, we found about half a mile of firm ground, then a very curious depression was reached, a hollow considerably below the level of the surrounding country, and known in this part of the world as a "dak." In any country less arid and desert than Persia it would form a lake, even here it attempted to do so. This "dak" was of very considerable size, being about twenty-six miles in length by seven miles wide. At the point where we crossed it was only about four miles wide, this being its narrowest part. In winter, or after heavy rain, it becomes a sheet of water, but at this season only a portion of its bed is covered with water; the rest is deep mud and particularly unpleasant to cross. We had to dismount and lead our horses over, the surface of the mud having dried sufficiently to bear a man, but the poor horses kept sinking in, and we got on very slowly. By crossing this bed of mud we saved eight miles of our journey, and as the distance we had to cover was thirty-five miles in any case, we were glad to save this amount. The part of the lake still flooded with water was perfectly clear, and as there was no efflorescence of salt on its bank, we thought it was sweet, and one of my

servants tried to drink some, but found it not only salt but very bitter.

About eight miles beyond the salt lake we reached the small fort of Yazdun, which stands very high, so we saw it for a distance of many miles. Soon after crossing the bed of the lake we came on a well-marked path running towards the south. I asked the guide where it led to. He said, "Nowhere, that is only a Turkoman raider's road, and never used by any honest man." It must have been pretty well frequented even yet, to be so well defined. The spring which I passed called Pettargun was so frequented by Turkomans that it had also a Turki name, being called the "Poet's Spring" in that language.

The fort at Yazdun had very high walls and a low stone door, and it had also a central keep, such as I have never seen elsewhere in Persia. I should think the fort was very ancient. The door was formed by a large millstone which could be rolled back into a hollow place. The walls were in bad repair, which is generally the case in Persian forts, with the exception of Karat. It was very praiseworthy of the Amir of Kain to keep up and garrison this fort, as I believe he got nothing by it, while it actually cost him money to do so, and to pay the garrison.

About twenty-five years ago, a party of Afghan robbers took possession of this place, and used to make raids from it on to the Persian border. As it is well within the Persian frontier the Amir of Kain took possession, and placed here a "naib," or lieutenant, and thirty foot-soldiers.

From the top of the keep at Yazdun I had a good view and was able to take the bearings of several mountains in Afghanistan. Ghurian is fifty-eight miles from Yazdun, Herat seventy-eight miles, and Subzawar sixty-nine miles. About nine years ago (*i.e.* from 1882) a serious attack was made on Yazdun by nomad Baluchis, who nearly succeeded in capturing the place by surprise. The garrison, however, managed to shut the gates and open a heavy fire on the marauders with some wall-pieces, or "zamburaks," which were mounted on the walls, but the Baluchis destroyed all the growing crops.

Yazdun contained ninety-six inhabitants including the garrison. I was very well received at Yazdun, though the "naib" was absent at the moment but returned in course of the day. I had left my tent behind at Charaks, but the best room the place afforded was given to me (though that was a very poor one), handsome Persian carpets were spread out, and it was made as comfortable as possible.

## CHAPTER XV

### A JOURNEY ACROSS THE DESERT

ON the 21st April, I returned to Charaks, having thanked the "naib" at Yazdun. On my return journey from Yazdun, I again passed the spring at Pettargun, and the horseman who had accompanied me from Yazdun showed me a spot near the spring where he had constructed a place to hide, so as to shoot the wild asses, which are here very numerous, when they came to drink. He said, "I have shot three wild asses, and many antelopes from that hiding-place, but it is a dangerous spot, as one is as likely to be shot by Turkomans oneself as to shoot anything."

After returning to Charaks, I resumed the ordinary road to Birjand on the 22nd April.

I halted at Dizg, twenty-one miles, and on the 23rd April at Nakab, a small village just out of the mountains, where I could procure no food, and had to go  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles off the road to Dareh Charim.

On the 24th April I marched twenty miles to Sar-i-Shah, on the 25th 11 miles to Marak, and on the 26th I reached Birjand, 11 miles.

The little detour I had made from Charaks to

Yazdun was well repaid by the visit it enabled me to pay to the curious fort there.

The Amir of Kain gave me a really nice house in a garden near the town of Birjand to live in. He himself resided at another house some distance off. I called upon him and breakfasted with him three times altogether. He had a bad name amongst Englishmen, because he treated the mission under Sir Frederick Goldsmid very roughly, and Sir Charles MacGregor was not treated civilly at first. The Amir presented me with three nice small carpets, and also sent a supply of food for several days. In return I presented him with a breech-loading carbine, a pair of field glasses, a goshawk, a good silver watch, and a revolver. While I was here Sirdar Mahomed Khan Afghan, a great partisan of Sirdar Ayub Khan arrived. He talked to me about Sirdar Ayub Khan's want of courage. I gathered from many sources that Ayub Khan was wanting in courage, but Sirdar Mahomed Khan was the first of his own immediate followers who openly spoke about it.

The last time I breakfasted with the Amir of Kain we had a very pleasant party, and a very sumptuous repast, enough for five and twenty people, though there were only four persons present, namely, the Amir and his son, Sirtip Nur Mahomed Khan, myself, and a young man sent by the Governor-General of Khorasan to try and extract money out of the Amir of Kain. There was a display of very pretty red Russian china from Moscow, also Chinese china bowls, with sherbet, pickles, sauces, etc., besides kabobs of several kinds and "pillafs" innumerable. I care very little what I eat, but it was very kind of



the Amir to stand me so good a breakfast. The conversation turned chiefly upon Russia, and I found that what I considered a very exaggerated idea of Russia's powers was entertained, though Great Britain was looked upon as a good second, still only as a second. It is not wonderful that Russia, after what she has done in Central Asia, should have so high an estimate formed of her power. Mir Alum Khan Hushmut ul Mulk is the title the Amir has received from the Shah. He is one of the few men in Khorasan, who, I believe, is patriotic, and would prefer the friendship of Great Britain to that of Russia, though he is sharply alive to his own interests, but he evidently would, other things being equal, prefer Great Britain to Russia, because he saw that Russia is liable to swallow up Persia, while Great Britain is not at all likely to do so. I was much astonished at a speech I heard from a border Governor (not the Amir of Kain), about the treaty lately made with Russia for the settlement of the Russian frontier. Very exaggerated rumours of the amount of country ceded to Russia prevailed. This particular governor said, much to my astonishment, "I should have preferred that the country was ceded to England rather than Russia, but I would prefer either to the——" and he stopped, as he saw people listening. I could easily fill up the blank, as I knew he meant the Shah. I was surprised at the hostility shown all over Khorasan to the Kajar rule. It is hated, and is only tolerated because of the utter despair of shaking it off. I feel certain that any Christian invader, so long as they left the shrine of Imam Riza at Mash-had untouched, would be welcome

in Khorasan, but an Afghan invader would be bitterly resisted, because, being Sunni Mahommedans, they are hated by the Shiahhs. It is curious how the love of Ali and his family have taken the place of patriotism and every other feeling in Persia. One has only to be present at one of the miracle plays representing the death of Hussan and Hussein, to see how genuinely and deeply the people all love the memory of Ali and his family, and they would shed the last drop of their blood to protect the Holy Shrine of Imam Riza, (the eighth in descent from the sainted Ali) from desecration by the Sunni Mahommedan. Great Britain can, I consider, have no possible business in Persia either as friend or foe, and I do not think Persia's friendship is worth the cost of its purchase by us, while northern Persia must fall eventually into the hands of Russia. In some parts of northern Persia the Kajar rule is *not* disliked, such as in Azarbijan, or in the Kajar tribe's own district of Astrabad, but all over Khorasan it is utterly detested. In southern Persia the people are, I think, more or less indifferent, the only feeling there being that they would prefer a Persian ruler to a Turk, as the Kajars are. The Shah does not speak Persian amongst his own family or women, though of course he can speak it, but only as a foreigner, as it is not his native tongue. I myself think the Kajars are the only possible rulers of Persia, and that a Turk makes a better ruler than any Persian would, and Turks are, at all events, manly people with whom one can have a fellow feeling.

On the 25th of May I made a journey to the

southward, across a portion of what is called the Lut desert. The first day I started in the afternoon, and rode to the village of Khusf, which I reached about midnight, and was put up in a nice house situated in a garden belonging to the Amir of Kain. He had sent a couple of horsemen with me, one of whom was a man of some position, and being known as a confidential servant of the Amir, I met with great kindness everywhere. Khusf is a small town of about 6000 inhabitants, and is surrounded with much cultivation. It stands on the banks of a river, the same as that on which Birjand is situated. I could discover no name for it, it being most difficult in Persia to get the names of rivers and mountains. A river is generally called by the name of the town on its banks, and therefore changes its name at each town it reaches. When I suggested to some of the inhabitants that the name of this river was Ab-i-Shur or the Salt river, they jumped at the idea, though I do not believe they had ever heard it called so before, but the name suited it well enough as the water was brackish. When my groom, who was an Armenian and very much more intelligent than ordinary Persians, having been educated at Dr. Bruce's mission-school at Ispahan, was swimming about in some water we passed, I said to him, "No doubt you learnt to swim in the Zaindarud," which is the name of the river at Ispahan. He replied, "No, sir, I did not learn to swim in the Zaindarud, but in the Ispahan river," as he did not actually know that the large river passing his native town was called the Zaindarud, or, in other words, that the Ispahan river and the Zaindarud were one and the same.

Another instance of this is shown by what people call the Abrishmi river. The name of this river is the Kalmoura, but the majority of Persians and also Europeans cross it on the main post-road between Mash-had and Teheran by a bridge which was built by a silk merchant, and which is called 'Pul Abrishmi' or the silken bridge; so they call the river the 'Abrishmi' or the Silken river, which is certainly not its name. The river which flows past Khusf, though at this point very slightly brackish, becomes lower down very salt indeed, and finally is lost in the desert. Karez, or underground canals, carry the water of this river in every direction over the country. I think the wonderful patience shown by the Persians in the labour of excavating these underground channels for water is surprising. Every drop of water has to be bored for and tunneled through miles and miles of ground, before the precious liquid reaches the crop for which it is intended. In this barren and arid country nothing can be grown without irrigation. The work of tunneling is very dangerous, and a man was killed by the falling in of the tunnel at which he was at work the day I reached Birjund. My mirza said to me, "Snake charmers, lion tamers, and karez diggers very seldom die in their beds."

At 5 p.m. on the 26th of May I left Khusf, and after travelling about four and a half miles through broken country, reached the small Arab village of Dastajird. There was a little cultivation here, but the people chiefly lived by their flocks. After leaving this village, the road passes for several miles through low hills. At twenty miles from Khusf

we reached a tower and small caravanseri by the roadside. There was a small karez, the water of which was not brackish, but it was tainted by the numbers of sheep brought here to water. I could not here procure another guide, but the guide from Dastajird agreed willingly for an extra payment to go on. The tower and karez at this place are known as Jambuk. At eleven miles from Jambuk the large village of Khur was reached. The actual land here belonged to the Khan of Tabbas, who kept a garrison of eight men in the fort at this place, but the chief revenue of the village, derived from cattle and sheep, was paid to the Amir of Kain. There was thus a sort of joint possession. Khur is situated in a very strong position, and used to be very liable to attack by bands of marauding Baluchis, but for the last ten years since the Amir of Kain has got a good hold of Seistan he has kept the Baluchis in order. There is no doubt the rule of the Amir of Kain has been a beneficial one, and he deserves credit for putting down the constant Baluchi raids to which all Tabbas, parts of Kirman, and even parts of Yazd, were formerly exposed, and he has rendered travelling in this part of the world possible, and even safe. There is a regular road from Birjand to Yazd which passes through Khur. The best road from Birjand to Kirman also passes through Khur, as also does the best road to Tabbas, so there are many passers-by. Between Khur and any place situated to the westward or southward, a piece of desert must be passed. On the road to Kirman there is a stretch of about eighty miles without inhabitants, except at one point. On the road to

Tabbas about sixty miles of uninhabited country is passed.

The situation of Khusf is most unusual and interesting, and its geological formation is very peculiar. While I was at Khur, Sifiraz Khan, a son of Ibrahim Khan, of Chikhansur, who had been at Teheran for twenty-three years, passed through. He had been retained at Teheran as a sort of hostage for his father's good behaviour, but had now been permitted by the Shah to go back to Chikhansur, as his brother-in-law, the Amir of Kain, who had married his sister, had interceded for him. I was sorry not to have seen him. He smoked a pipe with my "mirza," but would not come in to see me. His father, Ibrahim Khan, of Chikhansur, was a notorious old savage, and once boiled down an English traveller named Dr. Lord because, he said, he had heard that Englishmen were made of gold, but, needless to say, he failed to obtain any of that commodity by this act of ferocity. He has since then been visited by the late Sir Lewis Pelly and also by Colonel Lovett. Most extraordinary stories were told of this man, how at night he used to retire to a tower to which no human being was ever admitted, and spend his time surrounded by very savage dogs.

On the evening of the 28th of May I quitted Khur, with a most dreary march through absolute desert in prospect. I hired a guide mounted on what was said to be a fast trotting camel, but the guide and the camel both proved to be imposters, as the former did not know the road, and the latter could not trot. Another camel, which also could

not trot, was hired to carry the food for three days' supply for men and horses. Just as we were starting, the guide declared that one camel could not carry the load, though it really was a very light one, but being chiefly chaff it was bulky, and no bags for holding the chaff could be procured, so it had to be placed on the two camels, and the imposter of a guide had to walk. He declared there would be no difficulty on that point, as he was so good a walker that our horses could not keep up with him.

At the end of eight miles we came to a solitary tree and a tank of sweet water. Here the guide attempted a short cut by a road he had never travelled before, and, as a result, lost his way. I saw where he had taken up a new direction, as I happened to be surveying along the road, the moonlight being almost as bright as day. The guide declared he was right and I was wrong, but he soon became footsore, as his shoes did not fit him, and one of my servants had to lend him his shoes ; then he got tired, and two of my servants took it in turns to walk, while the guide rode one of their horses.

At 2 A.M., when we should have reached the well out in the desert for which we were bound, the moon set, and the guide declared he did not know where we were. As there was nothing else to be done, I had the loads taken off, and we went to sleep for about one and three-quarter hours, until daybreak. When it became light, the guide told us he still had no idea where we were, but after wandering about the desert for a couple of hours, we at last found the wells. There were two of them situated in a

ravine, and about six feet deep, both decidedly brackish, but a thirsty man could drink them. We found that the two camels which had gone by another road, had arrived before us. The country passed over was very barren and desolate, consisting of sand hills into which the horses' hoofs sank, intersected with pieces of "kavir." This kavir was of a kind known as rotten kavir, which looks as if it had been ploughed up and then left for a couple of years. The horses' hoofs sank very deep into this stuff, but it was of no great extent, and most of the ground passed over was firm. At eighteen miles the bed of a wide, dried up, salt river was crossed, the whole bed being full of pure white salt. This river takes its rise in the marsh at hur. I stopped at the wells, which I knew were called Balaband, though I did not have my tent pitched, as it would have fatigued my servants owing to the terrible heat, but instead I rigged up a thick kashmir blanket on two poles. Owing to a hot wind which was blowing the heat was perfectly unbearable; my servants felt it very much, and so did the poor horses even when standing still. I had no thermometer with me to register the heat, but it really was scorching. These two wells of Balaband were said to be a favourite halting place for Baluchi marauders, before the Amir of ain had brought them to order.

At four in the afternoon, though the heat was still very great, we loaded up, and were on our way again in half-an-hour. At first the mules travelled very slowly, though the two camels ridden by the two guides, having now only a little chaff to carry



between them, did get up a sort of trot, while I rode at the front on a very fast-walking horse. The country we were passing over was very melancholy and depressing, with its bare rocky hills and equally barren plains. Soon after starting, we saw a doe antelope with two fawns, but the heat was so great that I did not encourage my greyhounds to chase them. At one place we crossed about a mile of pure salt desert, a thick crust of salt lying on the surface and looking just like snow. Five miles after leaving Balaband we got on to a well-marked track, as we had only gone to the wells for the sake of the water, which lay about five miles off the actual route. Near the place where we struck the road from Khur to Naiband is a curious black hill, I think a black basalt, which looks almost like a column rising perpendicularly from the plain, and is, I was told, very difficult indeed of ascent. A party of Baluchi marauders some years ago took possession of the top of this mound; how they got up would be difficult to say, and they were dislodged only after considerable fighting.

At fourteen miles from Balaband we reached two "haoz," or covered tanks, but they contained no water, though the guides said they usually had water until the summer. At seven miles further another "haoz" was passed, also dry, and seven miles beyond we reached another empty haoz. Six miles after passing this last haoz we reached the site of the place where we were supposed to encamp. This was the bed of a dry river, where water could be procured at one spot by digging in the bed of the stream. Our guides, who at Khur had declared

they knew the place well, utterly failed us. One said, "I never was here in my life, and know nothing about it," and the other, "I was here once twenty-five years ago, but I do not remember where to find the water." The servant of the Amir of Kain, whom he sent with me, behaved very well. He spread our whole party out at intervals of about a hundred yards from each other, and we searched the whole bed of the stream for a considerable distance. At last we came upon a spot where some small holes had been dug in the bed of the dry river, and by clearing out one or two of these, we at last obtained water which was good and sweet, though stained with ferruginous clay. We were very thankful to get it after the nasty salt stuff we had drunk at Balaband. Our mouths got quite salt, and no amount of the salt water would assuage our raging thirst. Though I found this water too dirty to wash in, I was delighted to drink it as it was sweet. The salt water which we had carried with us from Balaband, and drank there, made us all very ill.

Having started at 5 p.m. the day before, we did not halt here until 4.30 a.m., having been  $11\frac{1}{2}$  hours actually marching, and we never rested for more than five minutes the whole time. It is true we lost half an hour searching for this water, but the distance travelled this day must have been at least 37 miles. These wells are known as Shand Ali Rezah Khan; "shand" meaning a shallow well of the description here given. To-day the heat in my tent was terrific, but not quite so bad as the day before. There was a very high, hot wind blowing, which threatened once to carry off my

small single fly tent, which was quite unsuited for such weather, but I should have been sorry to lose it. In India we always used double fly tents, but I don't suppose in such terrific heat as we had at this place it would have made much difference. The hot wind covered us with sand, but in some ways it was a blessing. I did not attempt a bath, for the water, though tasting well enough, looked too dirty, stained as it was with red clay, but it seemed nectar to us after the salt stuff we had been drinking the day before and all night on the road.

At six in the evening, we left Shand Ali Rezah Khan, crossing an even more than usually desolate country. So far we had occasionally seen a bush or two, and our camels could sometimes get a scanty grazing of tamarisk bushes, but now all vegetation of any kind ceased. At eight miles we crossed a narrow salt river bed, waterless, but covered with a coating of salt, which glittered beautifully white in the moonlight. At the end of twenty miles we reached the village of Niaband perched on a hill, a spur of the Niaband mountain, which we had seen for the last two days. This hill, though it can be seen from a great distance, is not, I think, very high, probably not more than 5,500 ft. or so.

The whole country beyond Niaband towards Khabis is real Lut desert, the most desolate I have ever seen. Standing on the summit of a hill about a mile beyond Niaband on the irman road, I had an extensive view of it, and though I thought I had had a good experience of deserts both in Africa and Persia, I had never seen anything worse than

these miles and miles of utterly burnt-up country. The natives call it the "burnt soil." It is not salt, except in places where a salt river enters it, but consists of miles and miles of bare, scorched plain, about 3,000 ft. above the level of the sea, with many low ranges of stony, rocky hills rising to about 1,000 ft. more, crossing it. It quite pained my eye only looking out upon it. The natives assured me that there is not at this season a drop of water for 160 miles, except at one or two places, where, for a short time after rain, there is a small quantity. Caravans, however, manage to cross this "Lut" in winter, but never at this season, as there is an easier road to Kirman which passes by the small town of Rawar, and which, though it crosses a more or less barren country, does not traverse this desert, and water is found at something like reasonable intervals. The distance from Niaband to Kirman via Rawar is 230 miles, and Niaband is a sort of oasis, surrounded in every direction by desert, but on the road to Kirman via Rawar, the difficulties have been smoothed over as much as possible, as this is a great pilgrim route from southern Persia to Mash-had, and efforts are made to keep it open.

I was very glad to reach Niaband, though I should be very sorry indeed to have to live there. I arrived on the 31st of May and spent that day, also the 1st and 2nd of June there. The people declared that they hardly considered the hot weather had yet commenced. In the best room the place afforded, which was a poor enough one, at eight in the evening, my thermometer registered 96°, and all day it stood

at 99° Fahrenheit.\* Though this may not sound very high to people in India, where I have seen the thermometer remain day and night much higher (I have seen it even by night at 113°), the heat in Persia is more trying because of the violent alterations of temperature, and the lack of appliances to keep oneself cool, such as punkahs. The difference of the day and night temperature in these deserts was very great, and at night I was glad to put a blanket over me.

The inhabitants here complained that they had had no date crop for two years, because a heavy fall of snow killed 2,000 of their date palms. At all events, in India you do not have terrible heat alternating with snow.

Niaband is a picturesque-looking place, and its position had been chosen entirely with a view to defence against the Baluchis. The houses resembled towers even when they were not actually used as such for defence against raiders. The Baluchis used to harry this neighbourhood very much until a few years ago, and even now (*i.e.*, 1882) roving bands of marauders occasionally wander over the country.

Some bands of Baluchis went up and plundered the country near Tabbas about two years ago. These were, probably, the bands which I heard so much about when I passed near Tabbas in disguise. After crossing the "Lut" desert on their swift-riding camels, they would stop to refresh themselves at Chasma Iraki,

\* At Nicosia, in the Island of Cyprus, at a latitude slightly north of this, the *average* summer shade temperature is about 106° F., and the *maximum* recorded (in July) is 115° F. These temperatures were taken at an altitude of about 650 feet above the sea, and I have often seen the temperature at night at the sea coast well over 90° F. [B.S.]

twelve miles from Niaband, where there were a few date palms and a spring of water. I saw this place yesterday from the top of a hill near here. These Baluchis used to plunder travellers on all the roads from Tabbas, from Kirman, and from Yazd. Since the Amir of Kain has held possession of Seistan, these raids were much less frequent. I heard of a man who had been wounded a few days before between this place and Kirman, and at Rui Khaf I met a man who showed me a fresh wound which he had received from Baluchis while on his way from Kirman to Mash-had. But things have been undoubtedly much better since the Amir of Kain has had possession of Seistan instead of the Afghans. A poor village as Niaband is, it is a great thing to find a half-way house in the desert, as it is three marches from Khur in the one direction and also three marches to Derbend, the first caravanseri in the Kirman district. Niaband has 360 inhabitants, including those of a small hamlet situated two miles off named Zaratgah, where a nice stream of good water gushes out of the mountain side. The water is warm when it first issues forth, and a prophet who caused the water to gush out, is said to be buried at this spot. Niaband can produce 100 fighting men in case of Baluchi attacks. The chief product is dates, but they are not of a very high quality, and as I said before there had been no date crop for two years. Enough wheat and barley are produced to feed the people, but not for travellers, who have to be contented with food imported from Khusf and sold to them at a very high rate.

Out in the desert, six miles from Niaband, there

is a small warm spring, called "Dig-i-Rustam," or the Pot of Rustam, the Persian Hercules.

While I was here a large caravan and camels passed this place on its way from Kuh Bunan to Birjand, loaded with the dye stuff called "rhonas." I was interested to hear of Kuh Bunan, as Marco Polo mentions his travelling from Kuh Bunan across this desert to a place called "Tun-o-Kain," by which evidently the towns of Tun and Kain are meant. At present the town of Kain belongs to the Tabbas district, while Kain has a separate Governor. It is curious that, by Persians, "Tun" is still joined to the name of another town with "o" between it. A Persian always says "Tun-o-Tabbas." No doubt in the time of Marco Polo, "Tun" was attached to "Kain" and was called Tun-o-Kain.

It was such a comfort to see the thermometer the last day I was at Niaband go down to  $100^{\circ}$ ; it had stood at  $111^{\circ}$  the day before in the coolest place I could find, yet I think the day I passed at Balaband on my journey here was even hotter, but I had no thermometer with me at the time.

We left Niaband on the 3rd of June, 1882, and spent another day at Shand Ali Reza Khan; the next night we marched until we reached the black, almost perpendicular, hill which I mentioned before, and which is known as "Kala Baluch," or the Fortress of the Baluchis, because, when the Baluchis raid in this neighbourhood, they seize it and make it their headquarters. We took our loads off the mules and slept near this hill; but our guides, even though they were riding trotting camels, could not keep up with us and so were some distance behind. At

dawn, the guides having turned up, we went five miles further to the wells at Balaband, where I had my tents pitched this time and spent another hot, uncomfortable day drinking rather brackish water. At sunset we set off for Khur, and arrived there about 1.30 in the morning, very glad to have done with the desert. I halted a day at Khur, as my horses and mules were rather done up. There were great holes full of deep water near Khur, where my horses, mules, and men all had a swim, an unusual luxury in Persia. My Arab horse swam well, as even did the mules, but my Turkoman horse could not, or would not, swim a stroke. I do not suppose he had ever seen much water.



## CHAPTER XVI

### MOHSINABAD AND THE BADGHIS COUNTRY

ON the evening of the 6th of June, 1882, I rode thirty miles to Khusf. It was such a pleasure getting to a clean, comfortable house again in a nice garden, and in the morning a cup full of fine white apricots, the first of the season, were brought to me. I felt my desert troubles were over, and I was quite willing to give my share of 'kavir' to anyone who wanted it. That evening I rode back twenty-three miles to Birjand, and returned to the house I had previously occupied, and which had been supplied to me by the Amir of Kain. I found the horse and mule that I had left there sick quite well again, and a great bag of books, letters, and newspapers from England had arrived from Mash-had. I had had no letters for about five weeks, so, although it was nearly midnight when I arrived, I sat up to a late hour enjoying them. One of the troubles of being stationed at Birjand was the distance I had to send for my mail. My men had to go to the post office at Mash-had, and back, to bring it a distance of nearly 600 miles—a long way to send for one's post. Though I was pretty well.

when I returned here from Birjand, two days afterwards I had a very serious attack of illness, the result of the fearful heat and all the bad water I had been drinking. I met with great kindness from the Amir of Kain who constantly sent to enquire after me, and also wished to send his own physician, but that I declined, preferring my own medicines. Rest and quiet, however, soon put me right, but crossing the desert in the summer is an experience I would not care to undertake again.

After a further short stay at Birjand, I made an excursion towards Afghanistan as far as a place called Tabbas, which must not be confounded with Tabbas in the desert (W.N.W. of Birjand). I went quite close to the frontier to Duruh, and from thence I turned northward again and gradually worked my way to Rui Khaf, where I arrived the end of July, and was glad to meet again Dervish Aly Khan, the Governor of Khaf.

After I had stayed some time at Khaf this second time, I received a letter from the Indian Foreign Secretary at Simla saying that my services were no longer required on this frontier, and directing me to rejoin my regiment. I was much astonished at this, as my correspondence from England seemed to show that the intention of the home Government was that I should remain somewhere near Herat for a long period. As I was not told by what route I should rejoin my regiment, and I could not travel by the direct road through Afghanistan, I decided to rejoin my regiment viâ London, and returned to that place, which I reached by way of Teheran and Russia on the 28th of November, 1882. I received

orders in London to go back to my post, but if possible to live at Mohsinabad, which would be a little nearer Herat. While in London I was given some work to do for the India Office, and before going out again was granted six weeks' leave. At the end of that period I went out again *viâ* Russia, which was the quickest way, and reached Baku on the 12th of April, 1883. I took the steamer to Resht, in Persia, and posted to Teheran where I purchased horses and mules, and marched to Mash-had by the post road.

On reaching Mash-had, I heard that the Shah of Persia was coming there to lay down the new frontier between Russia and Persia. I was informed that no member of the British Legation at Teheran was to accompany His Majesty on this journey, but that I was to be with him instead, and so, after a very short stay at Mash-had, I, in company with Mirza Abbas Khan, the British Consular-Agent in Mash-had, marched to Kuchan, and from thence to Shirwan, where I met the camp of His Majesty the Shah, who was accompanied by an enormous retinue. We marched with his camp back to Kuchan, and from there to Chasmeh Gilas, a rather celebrated spring of fresh water in the Mash-had district, where the Shah remained several days.

From here I returned to Mash-had and awaited the Shah's arrival, which did not take place for some days. He had a great reception on his entry to Mash-had, it being not only the Holy City to which, among other things, he was making a pilgrimage, but also the capital of his most eastern province of Khorasan.

A few days after the Shah's arrival I had rather a stormy interview with him. There were several matters connected with the complaints of British subjects residing at Mash-had, which Sir Ronald Thomson, our Minister at Teheran, wished me to get settled by the Shah during his stay at Mash-had. So the Shah's brother (the Governor-General), myself, and Mirza Abbas Khan, were ordered to attend before him, and the matters were fully and carefully gone into by the Shah. One of the complaints was the flogging, by order of the Governor-General, of two natives of Kandahar, whom we at that time were claiming as British subjects, and also his taking possession of the property of a deceased British-Indian subject, which I claimed to be made over to me to be sent to his relatives. Speaking in Persian, I took care to give His Majesty all his proper titles in addressing him, which I saw pleased him well, but, I added, "I regret to tell your Majesty that His Royal Highness, the Governor-General, has told you nothing but lies." I am glad to say that I obtained from the Shah not only the restoration of 800 tomans, the property of the Indian which the Governor-General had confiscated, but also (which I thought of even more importance) his promise that the two policemen, who had flogged the two British subjects from Kandahar, should themselves be flogged in presence of Mirza Abbas Khan.

I told Mirza Abbas Khan that he was to be satisfied after only one or two blows had been given, as the principal thing I was contending for was that no British subject, Indian or Afghan, should be struck, without reason, by the governor's order. The Shah

complimented me on the way I spoke Persian, and said "I never met a European who spoke it better." I hear that, after he allowed me to go, he pitched into his brother very strongly for his conduct. Altogether I had two or three interviews with His Majesty at, and near, Mash-had.

I was rather amused at a slight punishment which the Shah managed to inflict on his brother the day he made his public entry into Mash-had. When the Governor-General dismounted from his horse at the entrance of the town, and caught hold of the Shah's stirrup to take the place of his groom (this is always done by Persian nobles on the entrance of His Majesty into a town), the Shah, instead of, as usual, only making him accompany him for a step or two, compelled his brother to walk by the side of his horse about half a mile or more through the town, and not only that, but he made his horse walk very fast, which, as the Governor was a decidedly stout man, was trying, not only to his feelings, but also to himself personally, as it put him very much out of breath. This was to impress upon the populace of Mash-had that, if the Governor-General was only fit to be his groom, what a very important personage the Shah must be.

After remaining some time at Mash-had I went to Turbat-i-Shaikh Jami, and from there made two excursions into the country between the Hari Rud and the Murghab rivers, being supplied by the headman of that place with an escort of ten Persian cavalry. I crossed the Hari Rud near Taman Agha, and visited Chakmakli, which means "the place of flints," this being the spot where the Turkomans procured flints for their flint-lock muskets before

they had percussion caps. I also visited Adam Ulan, a well of fresh water in the desert, east of Pul-i-Khatun. Adam Ulan is translated in the "Proceedings of the Geographical Society" as the "Ford of Adam or the man," but I do not think this can be the real meaning, as there is no ford, or even water, except a small spring near here. I expect the translation given me by my Turkoman guide is more likely to be correct. He said, "That spring was called Adam Ulan, or the man that died," and referred to a Persian captive killed here by the Turkomans, probably because he could go no further, and his captives wished to get rid of him.

I returned from Adam Ulan to Pul-i-Khatun, or the Lady's Bridge, where stand the ruins of a brick bridge, supposed to have been built by the daughter of the Amir Timur. I also visited Zurabad, where the Persian Government had settled a considerable number of Saruk Turkomans, the chief of which place sent his nephew to accompany me on my journey.

I also explored the ruins of Kila Bunyad Khan. The two excursions which I made into Badghis from Taman Agha were rather dangerous, as the Turkomans were raiding freely at this time, and I do not think the escort of ten men I had with me would have been of much assistance, supposing I had been attacked. One day I came upon the tracks of a party of Afghan cavalry in pursuit of some Turkomans, who had carried off two flocks of sheep and two shepherds from Afghan territory. Of course the Afghan cavalry had shod horses, while I knew Turkoman horses were hardly ever shod, but I

presently crossed the track of the Turkomans, whose horses were unshod. I had not expected, as we were a very considerable distance from Afghan territory, that Afghans would have pursued so far, but the Afghans stuck to the raiding Turkomans for a long way, and finally took the sheep and shepherds back to Afghanistan. Persian cavalry certainly would not have recovered the flocks of sheep and prisoners who had been carried off so far from their own territory. This is but another instance of what I have stated elsewhere, namely that the Afghans despise the Turkomans, and do not consider them brave men, and will readily face them even when they themselves are an inferior force.

I finally left Turbat-i-Shaikh Jami and went to Mohsinabad, where I was given, by Mir Punj Yusuf Khan, the same house that I had occupied on my previous visit. Mohsinabad was a better place for me to stay at than Khaf, as it was close to the Afghan border, and I could communicate much more easily with Herat, and through Herat with India, as the telegraph office was only sixty-two miles from Mash-had.

I remained at Mohsinabad for about one year, as it was a good place for my duties, and I had a fairly comfortable house to live in; at all events it possessed doors and windows, which was a great advantage in cold and snowy weather, though not much snow falls at Mohsinabad.

On several occasions during my residence at Mohsinabad, I accompanied parties of Persian cavalry in pursuit of Turkoman raiders, and during that time, from September 1883 to May 1884, some

thirty persons were carried off into slavery by the Turkomans from this part of the country, a few being from the village of Mohsinabad itself.

The utter contempt with which the Turkomans treated the Persian cavalry that pursued them was remarkable. I do not consider the Turkomans a



MOOSA KHAN.

brave race, as they seldom make raids on villages inhabited by Afghans, but there is a very marked difference in the feeling of dread which is shown by the Persian borderers of the Turkomans, and the sort of half-contempt with which they are spoken of as brigands and robbers by the Afghans. The Turko-



man raids made on villages in Afghanistan were much less frequent than those made in Persian territory, and very little booty was carried off by the Turkomans on the Afghan side of the border. A few villages, inhabited chiefly by people of Persian race, and just within the Afghan border, such as Kuhsan and Shabash, were liable to attack, but this was accounted for by the Turkomans having discovered that no great resistance would be met with from the Persian inhabitants of these villages. It is curious that the Turkomans, though born horsemen and accustomed to riding their horses such long distances, if serious fighting is likely to take place, generally prefer to fight on foot. In almost all the encounters I heard of between Persians and Turkomans, the latter have dismounted or else had infantry accompanying them who did the real fighting. A Jamshedi officer in the Persian service said to me, "We can always fight the Turkomans as long as they remain on their horses, but their way of fighting is to keep a certain number of cavalry skirmishing who retire and draw us on to a body of infantry hidden in some depression of the ground, who pour a volley into us and empty many saddles; and that is what we cannot stand." Turkomans may therefore be considered more as mounted infantry than as cavalry.

One day, during my stay at Mohsinabad, a large party of travellers was carried off by the Turkomans from the Herat road, not far from that village. The news soon reached a post of Persian cavalry, who went in hot pursuit. The Turkomans, with their prisoners, managed to cross the Hari Rud

river, which was then in high flood. They tied dry branches of trees together, buoyed them up with a few inflated goat-skins, placed their prisoners on this sort of breakwater, and partly by swimming and partly by wading got them over. The Persian cavalry then came up and might easily have caught them and recovered the prisoners, but they would not face the roaring flood of the river, and contented themselves with picking up two or three camels and some articles left on the bank by the Turkomans. Amongst these was a lady's back hair and a lady's slipper, showing that there was a female amongst the captives.

After a year at Mohsinabad I suffered serious illness from the brackish water and bad climate generally, and I had to return to England on sick leave.

## CHAPTER XVII

### HERAT

AFTER a few months in England I was appointed Second Assistant Commissioner on the Afghan Boundary Commission under Sir Peter Lumsden, who was Chief Commissioner.

I left London to join this Commission on the 26th November, 1884, and travelled again through Russia to Baku, crossing the Caspian, not to Resht as I usually did, but to Bunder Gez, the port of Astrabad. I rode thirty-two miles into Astrabad, and from there marched across the mountain to Shahrud, where I struck the main post-road from Teheran, and continued along it to Mash-had. From Mash-had I proceeded to join Sir Peter Lumsden, who at the time was somewhere near Punj-Deh, in the Turkoman country. I passed close to Mohsinabad on my way, and was met at Karez by an escort of thirty Afghan cavalry, sent by the Governor of Herat to conduct me to the camp of Sir Peter Lumsden.

From Karez I marched to Kuhsan. Leaving Kushan, I pitched a small tent at the foot of a pass where some shepherds had erected a tiny reed-

hut, of which the escort took possession, while I and my eight servants crowded into the tent. In the evening it came on to snow heavily, and one of the most awful storms I had ever seen commenced, the violent wind piling up the snow into great drifts. Fortunately I had a small iron bedstead with me and plenty of bedding, and also a fur-lined coat, or I think I should have been frozen to death. It snowed and blew a perfect hurricane all night and the whole of the next day. A party of five Afghan cavalry were caught in this storm while crossing a pass close to us, and two of them were frozen to death, and on a later occasion, when Sir Peter Lumsden was crossing another pass, thirty-five men were frozen to death. Our small tent was so crowded that two of my servants were only half in, their legs being out in the snow. Fortunately we had plenty of warm covering. I had often heard from Turkomans how they lost hundreds of sheep, when they were caught in a snowstorm accompanied with these high winds; I never understood it before. Once in the night the tent was nearly blown away, and we had to get up and fasten it down again by burying the iron pegs sideways in the ground to make them hold. In the morning we found it quite impossible to move on, but fortunately we discovered that some fifty camel-loads of provisions for Sir Peter Lumsden's camp had been left by the camel drivers close by the reed-hut in which my escort had taken refuge. The men said the storm might go on for days, but we got quite happy about it when we discovered that so much food was lying alongside of us. We took what was necessary for men and horses,

leaving a receipt for it. After another night of great discomfort, the sun rose clear and bright, the storm had come to an end, and we resumed our journey up the pass, which, though covered with snow, was quite practicable.

After a long march I reached the camp of Afghan troops, where I procured a tent from the chief man in command of it, who was very obliging. The next day, as it poured with rain, though it did not actually snow, I halted at this camp, and the day after marched on to meet Sir Peter Lumsden, who was returning from Punj Deh. I met him on the road, and accompanied him to his camp. Finally I went with him to Tirpul.

On the 4th of May, I was sent by Sir Peter Lumsden from his camp at Tirpul with two Engineer officers, Major Holdich and Captain Peacocke, to Herat. None of the members of the commission had at that time visited Herat, nor had any Englishman been inside the town for several years. Almost the last Englishman who had been there was Sir Lewis Pelly.

The first day we marched to Rozanak; the next day to the large and flourishing village of Shikeban, the whole country passed over being highly cultivated. The inhabitants of Shikeban are called Mervis and are the descendants of people who fled from Merv, when that town was taken by Amir Maasum of Bokhara about 1784, and were given lands at this place by the Afghan Government. The following day our party marched to Sahar Kiz, and on the 7th of May we reached Herat, and encamped in a beautiful garden, full of large rose-bushes and fruit-trees of all sorts, belonging to Amir Abdul

Rhaman Khan. We remained here a few days and made excursions in all directions to see the surrounding country. Amongst the places worthy of note that we visited was the holy shrine of Gazer Gah, which contains the tomb of a Mahommedan saint named Abdul Ansari. This shrine was built by Shah Rukh, the son of Amir Timur. A fine tomb has been erected over the remains of Amir Dost Mahommed Khan, the first Amir of the present reigning family of Afghanistan, who died at Herat very soon after he captured that town on the 26th May, 1863. The custodian of the shrine is one of the most influential of the priesthood of the country. We were received with all honour and conducted over the shrine, and were given tea by the chief priest. We made another excursion to the Masulla, or Great Mosque, just outside the town of Herat. The faience that covered the walls was very beautiful, and such enamelled tiles cannot now be made, the art having been lost in Persia and the East.

After a few days in the beautiful garden we moved into the town itself, and took up our quarters in the new palace which has been built for the Amir in case he should visit Herat. I was much struck by the dress of a portion of the Afghan troops, which was a close imitation of our own Highland regiments, the tartan worn by them being the Mackenzie tartan. They had taken the Mackenzie tartan from the Seaforth Highlanders, which was the Highland regiment in Cabul \* under Lord Roberts. The effect of

\* This refers to the 78th Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs), who were, however, not at Cabul but at Kandahar. The Afghans must have collected some of their discarded garments. [B. S.]

the kilt was, however, decidedly spoilt by the men wearing white trousers in addition to their kilts. Instead of the highland bonnet, they wore brown felt forage caps with large black peaks.

After a most sumptuous breakfast provided by the Governor, whose guests we were all the time we remained at Herat, we rode out to see the town.

The town of Herat is built on a high mound situated in a most fertile plain. This mound, which is about a mile square, is raised about sixty feet above the level of the surrounding country, and is evidently artificial, being in great part formed of the débris of former cities. The present town is believed to be the seventh occupying the same site. The surface of the ground immediately outside the town, and beyond the great ditch, is considerably lower than the surrounding country. The earth over a large surface had evidently been excavated for the purpose of building the fortifications, and also in part for raising the artificial mound on which the town is built. It is nearly square, but is rather more from east to west than from north to south, each side of the town being a little less than a mile. The town is divided into four quarters by two long central streets, the chief running from the 'arx' or citadel to the Kandahar gate, the other from the Kushkg gate to the Irak gate. These streets, which are about sixteen feet wide, are filled with shops, and form the four great bazaars of Herat. The point of intersection of these roads is called the "Chahar Su" or Four Streams, and is the chief trading centre, the best shops being situated in its neighbourhood. The main bazaars were in good order, and the shops

mostly occupied and open. The show of goods was, however, inferior to what could be seen in Mashhad or any important Persian town. The population of the town of Herat is largely of the Persian race, and of the Shiah Mahommedan form of faith. The number of people of true Afghan race is not large.

The Chahar Aimak tribes, who form so large a proportion of the population of the Herat district, are also represented in the town. These are Sunni Mahommedans by faith, though non-Afghans by race. There is a great deal of confusion about the Chahar Aimak tribes. "Chahar Aimak" means "four nomads," and "Aimak" is used in Herat simply to denote a nomad. The tribes now belonging to the Chahar Aimak are Timuri, Jamshedi, Firuzkuhi, Tæmuni, Hazara, and Kipchak. The Timuri have their headquarters at Khaf in Persia, but many remain in Afghanistan, especially about Sabzawar. The Timuri, though even now a numerous tribe, were formerly much more powerful, and lived in Badghis. They claim to be descended from Arabs, and are called Timuris because their original chief married a daughter of the Amir Timur. They are, however, called Juts by their enemies, but they resent being so-called, though they very much resemble in appearance the Juts of the Punjab, and I should fancy are descendants of the ancient Getæ.

The Jamshedis now dwell in Badghis in the vicinity of the Kushk stream, and claim originally to have come from Sistan, and thus are a Persian race.



The Firuzkuhi are also a powerful tribe, who say they were brought from the Firuz Kuh mountains, to the northward of Teheran in Persia.

The Hazara tribe included in the Chahar Aimak are chiefly settled about Kala Nau, in Afghanistan, and about Mohsinabad, in Persia, and are supposed to have come originally from Kittai or western China. Their Tartar faces, crookedly set eyes, and want of beard, show them to be of Turanian race; but it is curious that all these tribes speak neither Turk, Mongol, nor any other Tartar dialect, nor do they speak even Afghan, but Persian. These Hazaras of the Herat district are not all friendly with the mountain Hazaras, who are known to the Afghans as Berbari, and who inhabit so large a portion of the mountainous part of Afghanistan.

The Kipchaks are a small tribe settled about Obeh.

Herat in former times is said to have contained 100,000 inhabitants, but at present I do not think that, apart from the strong Afghan garrison, there is a population of more than 12,000, though the surrounding country is full of villages and very thickly populated. The whole of the Herat valley from Obeh to Kuhsan, or an area of probably 120 miles by about 12, is, I was told, cultivated like a garden, as the sixty miles I traversed from Kuhsan to some distance beyond Herat certainly were everything growing with the greatest luxuriance. Wheat and barley are produced in large quantities, while fruits such as peaches, apricots, grapes of many kinds, several varieties of plums, also mulberries, walnuts, and almonds, are grown in great profusion.

Pistachio nuts of a superior sort grow wild in abundance on the downs beyond the mountain range and on the lower slopes of the hills themselves, while the rich grassy country to the north of the mountains would afford pasturage for unlimited flocks of sheep.

The value of Herat to anyone approaching from the north has been shown over and over again. The Herat valley is the only place in this part of Central Asia where a large body of men could be fed, and anyone holding possession of Herat would have a most commanding influence in the affairs of Afghanistan and Persia.

While staying in the Amir's palace in Herat, we had a guard with us of ten of the 11th Bengal Lancers, my old regiment, of which I had been adjutant in India during the mutiny. Sir Peter Lumsden furnished us with these ten Lancers from the 200 men of this regiment forming his escort, in addition to the escort supplied us by the Afghan Government.

I, as political officer, went about Herat with Major Holdich and Captain Peacock, who were both engaged in making arrangements for the defence of Herat.

While on our way to Herat, a rather funny incident occurred. The colonel in command of the Afghan escort furnished to us for the journey, who was our "mehmander" or guest-master, had spoken to me in Persian the whole journey, as I told him I preferred to speak Persian rather than Afghan, and he, though an Afghan, also preferred to speak Persian, as it is the language of the Afghan Court. He, however, asked me if I could speak Afghan. I

said "Yes." Presently, when we met a party of Afghan troops in command of a brother of the mehmandar, who were on their way to Punj Deh to fight the Russians, I noticed that the mehmandar spoke to his brother neither in Persian nor in Afghan, so of course I knew he did not wish me to understand what he said. Both he and his brother had served in Afghan Turkestan, and I observed that they were talking Turki to each other. I became interested in what they were saying, and though I cannot speak much Turki, I understand it fairly well, and I heard the one say to the other, "You had better take these Englishmen away from here sharp, or else my men will proceed to murder them." I laughed and said, "You enquired if I spoke Afghan or not, and I told you I could, but you never asked me whether I spoke Turki or not; I quite understand what you are saying." The mehmandar laughed, and said, "There's no getting over you." But I noticed he at once took us from the neighbourhood of the Afghan troops to a strongly fortified village. The Afghans at this time thought we were on the side of Russia, but when we arrived at Herat, and the Engineer officers began showing them how to fortify more strongly, they knew we were their friends, and were most civil.

One day, when I was living in the Amir's palace at Herat, I received a despatch from Sir Peter Lumsden, telling me that he had been ordered to England, and that he and Captain Barrow, his aide-de-camp, were leaving at once for London, and that I was to follow as soon as possible and join him there but the Engineer officers would stay in Herat till

further orders, and that Sir Joseph Ridgeway was to take his place as Chief of the Commission in Afghanistan.

I returned at once to the camp at Tirpul, and started for Mash-had and England. I rode from Mash-had to Shahrud by post horse, and from Shahrud I went to Astrabad and stayed there with my friend Khokonoffsky, the Russian Consul at Astrabad. From Astrabad I went to its port, Bundar Gez, where I took the steamer across the Caspian to Baku, and thence to Tiflis, where I called upon the Governor-General of the Caucasus, who received me most kindly. He immediately gave me an order to be supplied with post horses at once, as if I had been travelling on the Emperor of Russia's own business, and he sent his aide-de-camp with me to the post station to see me off, and also a government courier who came with me all the way to Vladikafkaz, which I reached the following day, and started by train to Wilna in Poland, where I joined the train for Berlin. I was treated most kindly by the Russian authorities throughout my journey across Russia, and I wish here to acknowledge my indebtedness to all those through whose hands I passed on this occasion.

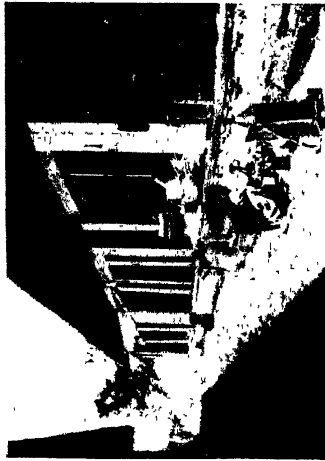
Their courtesy struck me especially at the time, as the possibility of war between England and Russia, over the attack by Russian troops on the Afghan garrison at Punj Deh was, for the moment, trembling in the balance.

I reached London on the 9th June, 1885, three days after Sir Peter Lumsden, and I think I did my journey pretty fast, as he had four days start of me

at Mash-had, and a letter which I posted at Mash-had did not reach London until eleven days after I did.

As soon as I reached London, I was placed on duty by the India Office, and remained in London in connection with the Afghan Boundary Commission until February, 1886, when I obtained furlough from my regiment in India.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### IN THE CONSULAR SERVICE. CONCLUSION

IN December, 1886, I was appointed H.M.'s Consul at Resht, in Persia, on the Caspian Sea. Just as I was on the point of starting for Resht, my services were applied for by the Egyptian Government to bore for petroleum at Jebal Zeit, on the eastern coast of the Red Sea. I proceeded there as quickly as possible, and found that a boring had been made and carried down to 1200 feet by an American. I was ordered to continue it, and I took the boring down to 2,200 feet, when the sea broke in and flooded it, though I had splendid pumping machinery and tried to pump the water out. The flooding being from the sea, I naturally could not reduce the water even one inch, and so the well had to be abandoned. I was furnished with a small steamboat, in which I made excursions to different points in the neighbourhood, and found good signs of petroleum at two different points, especially at one in the Sinai Peninsula, where some petroleum was oozing from the soil. The formation here was sandstone, in which petroleum is generally found in paying quantities, while the formation about Jebal Zeit was all limestone, in which petroleum is very seldom found in abundance. I advised the Egyptian Government to



make a trial boring here, which I could do at very little expense, as I had all the necessary tools and could convey them across in a Government steamer. But the Government, having already spent a large sum during the incumbency of my American predecessor, did not care to continue the experiment, and I was directed to search the country between Jebel Zeit and the Nile for signs of petroleum. I did so, but found none.

I then returned to Cairo, gave in my report, and proceeded as fast as possible to take up my appointment as Consul at Resht. I met Sir Drummond Wolfe, the new minister to Persia, at Tiflis, and travelled with him *viâ* Baku to Resht.

I had only been a short time at Resht, when troubles broke out in the neighbourhood of Astrabad, the Turkomans having commenced raiding very heavily in the neighbourhood of that town. I could easily have proceeded to Baku and crossed the Caspian to the Port of Gez, which is thirty-two miles only from Astrabad, but I was ordered to proceed to Astrabad by land, and had a most trying journey along the shore of the Caspian Sea. The rivers across which I had to swim my horse, or wade, were very numerous, and as it was an unusually rainy season, I had a very uncomfortable time. Captain Bailward, an Artillery officer, who happened to be visiting Resht at the time I started, accompanied me, which made the journey a little less lonesome than it would otherwise have been. •

After many difficulties I reached Astrabad, and as we had no Consulate there, I hired a native house, and soon afterwards my wife, who had met me at

Resht just before I left that place, crossed the Caspian from Baku in a Russian steamer, and joined us.

Astrabad, at this time, was very unhealthy, a bad form of fever being very prevalent from which both



NEWSWRITER AT ASTRABAD.

natives and Europeans suffered considerably. Both I and my servants (whom I had brought from Resht), were all down with it, and my wife and her English maid both had it. The Turkomans were raiding all

round the town, and were carrying off many cattle, also men and women, and a good deal of fighting was going on with the Persian troops in the neighbourhood. There were 13,000 Persian troops here at this time, but they seemed quite incapable of meeting and repulsing even so small a party as 50 Turkomans. I decided to send my wife home, as this did not seem a fit place for a lady, and took her down to Gez, the port of Astrabad, whence she crossed the Caspian for the third time that summer. Mr Khokonoffsky, the Russian Consul at Astrabad, kindly lent me one of his Cossack guards, who accompanied us to the port, and as soon as I had seen my wife on board the steamer, I returned to Astrabad, where I remained several months, watching the futile attempts of the Persians to suppress the Turkomans.

After a time, the Persian troops along the Gurgan river, a few miles from Astrabad, gained some small successes over the Turkomans, and peace was made.

I was now ordered to proceed to Mash-had, and replace General MacLean, Governor-General's Agent and Consul-General, who was proceeding on leave to England. I remained at Mash-had about eight months, when General MacLean returned from his furlough. As I knew Mash-had and the work here well, I found this a pleasant post.

Having been appointed Consul-General at Tabriz, near the western border of Persia towards Russia, I was directed to leave Mash-had and proceed there. I met General MacLean a few marches from Mash-had on his way there from England. On my road to Tabriz I stayed a short time at Teheran with Sir



Sketch by A.N.S.

ASTRABAD. TURKOMAN FRONTIER, LOOKING N.W. TOWARDS CHIKISLAR



Drummond Wolfe, to receive my instructions. Being the depth of winter, the snow-fall was very heavy, and the road from Teheran to Tabriz almost impassable, while the lofty iron telegraph posts of the Indo-European Telegraph Co. only just appeared above the snow. When I was within a few days' journey of Tabriz, the Heir-apparent, who was at that time Governor-General of Azarbaijan, very kindly sent out a man to meet me, and when I got within three miles of the town, a General with a large escort came out to welcome me. When I was only one mile from the town, the Prince's own carriage came for me, and I was escorted through Tabriz to the British Consulate General, which happens to be a very fine building. It was originally constructed for the British Minister when he resided at Tabriz, and when he moved to Teheran, it was made over to the Consul-General. On arrival at the consulate, I was received by a number of the highest Persian officials, who were sent by the Prince to call on me.

I afterwards called on the Prince himself, and also visited the Amir Nizam, who was the acting Governor-General, the Prince's duties being merely nominal. The Amir Nizam returned my visit, and for the first few days I was employed all day in calling on my colleagues, the Russian, the French, and the Turkish Consuls, besides a number of other people. I found the Turkish Consul General a particularly good fellow, and we became great friends.

Tabriz is a very pleasant place, and the climate is good. It lies high, being over 5,000 feet above the sea, and therefore is very cold in winter, and not hot even in summer. It is a wonderful place for fruit, every sort

being grown in profusion, grapes, peaches, nectarines, apricots, and they are not only plentiful, but are highly cultivated and very good. I would back the peaches of Tabriz against any in the world.

In the autumn, my wife came out from England to meet me. She had suffered much from the Astrabad fever after leaving that place, and I was indeed glad to welcome her at a post that was healthy, which neither Resht nor Astrabad had been.

I went to Tiflis to escort my wife to Tabriz. The journey from Tiflis to Tabriz took us eight days; four hours by train and the remainder of the time driving along very bad Armenian roads.

We crossed the Russian frontier at Julfa, on the Araxes, and in three days reached Tabriz, where we were most kindly received by our friends, both European and native. An escort of my European friends rode out many miles to meet us, and at about a mile from our house we were welcomed by a large party, who had prepared a banquet for us on a long table covered quite one foot deep with the most beautiful fruits. This entertainment was in a garden on the outskirts of the town, and I have never seen such fruit or such a profusion of it. We were afterwards escorted to our home by parties of mounted friends.

We spent a very happy time at Tabriz, which is quite a nice place, though it has a very severe winter. My wife had to return to England in December to start our son for India, where he joined the Seaforth Highlanders. I took her as far as Tiflis where I saw her into the train for Batum, and then returned to Tabriz. After some months at Tabriz, I was ordered

to return to Astrabad. Though I was Consul-General at Tabriz, the Shah never seemed happy unless there was a British Consul at Astrabad. I proceeded to Astrabad by Baku, across the Caspian to Michaelovsk, from which place the Russian Trans-Caspian Railway for Europe starts. Here I took the steamer for Bundar Gez, and rode from there to Astrabad, where I spent several months, and made many excursions along the Gurgan River, staying some time at a village on the Gurgan not far from the Persian fort of Ak Kalah. I also visited and remained some time with the Chief of the Atabai Yomuts, who treated me very kindly, and in company with some of his men crossed the country between the Gurgan and the Atrak rivers, and stayed a few days at one of his villages just this side of the Atrak. After returning to the camp of the Atabai's chief, I made an excursion up the Gurgan river, and visited some of the camps of the Jafarbai Yomuts, and finally returned to Astrabad, where I remained until September, 1890, when I received permission to proceed to Teheran. I marched by a very little-travelled road, through the Hazar Jarib mountains and by Firuzkuh to Teheran, where I remained about a month, stopping at Gulhek with Sir Arthur Nicolson, who was then acting as our Minister at Teheran.

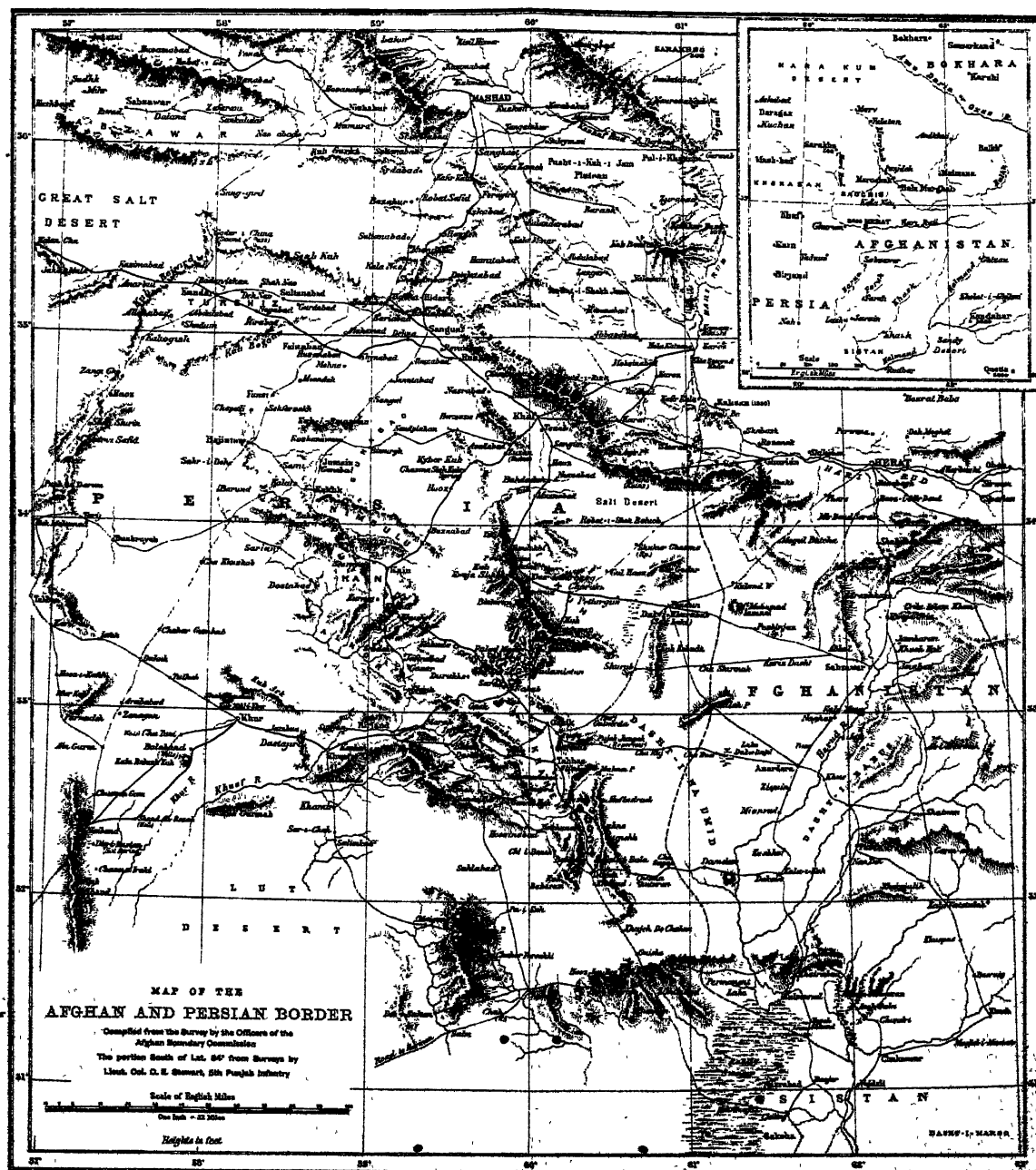
During this time I had a long interview with his Majesty the Shah, as I had done very frequently before, but on this occasion he was much interested in hearing of my journeys amongst the Atabai and Jafarbai. The Persian royal family being Kajars, really natives of Astrabad, the Shah looked upon Astrabad as his native place, and was always more interested in that part of Persia.



than in any other, and many of the immediate guards, which surrounded his person, were Astrabad Kajar chiefs.

In October, 1890, I applied for four months' leave home and reached London in December, and while on this leave I applied to H.M.'s Secretary for Foreign Affairs to be transferred as Consul-General from Tabriz to some European post, and Lord Salisbury was graciously pleased to appoint me Consul-General at Odessa, where I went in September, 1892. I was much pleased at receiving a European post, as I had completed thirty-eight years' service in Asia, partly in a military, and partly in a Consular capacity, and I think I may here end this account of an adventurous life, at Odessa. Though I had plenty to do, my duties lay in a quieter and more ordinary path than had been the case hitherto.

After serving seven years as Consul-General at Odessa, I retired in 1899, having completed forty-five years in the Government service.



**Revised: 2.6.5.202**

# APPENDICES



## APPENDIX I

### THE COUNTRY OF THE TEKKE TURKOMANS, AND THE TEJEND AND MURGHAB RIVERS.

BY

Lieutenant-Colonel C. E. STEWART, 5th Punjab Infantry.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, June 27th, 1881.)

[Reprinted by kind permission of the Royal Geographical Society  
from the "Proceedings" of September, 1881.]

MAP.\*

#### I.

IN April 1880 I left Constantinople for Persia, travelling by Trebizond, and through Armenia. At the time I passed through Armenia the famine in the land was terrible. When I approached a village, the first sight I saw was the whole of the women and children out in the fields collecting crocus bulbs, dandelions, and grass, to eat. I was glad to get away from a place where it was so dreadful to see suffering which one was unable to alleviate. There was no food for the people, and small gifts of money, which was all I was able to bestow, were nearly useless. I went from Erzerum by Bayazid to Khoi in Persia, visiting many of the battle-fields of the late war between Russia and Turkey *en route*, and passing over some of the Kurd country whence Shaik Obidullah later drew a portion of the troops with which he invaded Persia. I travelled from Khoi past the Lake of Urumiah to Tabriz and Teheran, and from Teheran to Ispahan. At Ispahan I remained for two months and a half, residing in the Armenian suburb of Julfa. I had determined to visit Daragez, and here I made my preparations.

Daragez is a district of the Persian province of Khorasan. It is situated across the mountain range which elsewhere forms the boundary of North-Eastern Persia. As Daragez projects into the Tekke Turkoman country it is a good place from which to gain information of that tribe. The best road from the country of the Akhal Tekke to the country of the Merv Tekke passes through the district. I knew that if I travelled as an Englishman, as Colonel Baker and Captain Gill had done, I should not be able to collect information, as I should

\* A large portion of this map is laid down from surveys made by Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart himself, much of it having not been previously surveyed. The parts of Khorasan unvisited by him are taken from the map of that province by Major the Hon. G. Napier, and the parts in the new Trans-Caspian province of Russia, from the Russian map of 1881. The country on the Tejend and Murghab rivers is laid down from information carefully collected from the Turkomans by Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart. For the portion of Afghanistan which appears, the map of Major-General Walker has been consulted.

be watched and have a guard with me, who, as the Persians would say, were furnished to do me honour and protect me, but who, I knew, would have positive orders to prevent my holding free and independent communication with the Turkomans in Daragez, and that if I was permitted to have any intercourse with Turkomans it would only be with such as would tell me what the Persian governor wished I should be told.

I had on one of my previous visits to Persia been at Julfa, and I knew it to be a good place at which to make preparations for my journey. I here hired two Armenians to accompany me on my travels, one as a sort of partner and clerk, the other as a servant. I determined to travel as an Armenian horsedealer of Calcutta. I had been in Baghdad and Mesopotamia, and knew the ways of the Bombay horsedealers who visit those places. This knowledge now stood me in good stead. As the price of horses has risen very high in Baghdad, some of these men visit Persia, and travel as far as Mash-had on horse-dealing expeditions; and I found one party had actually been to Mahomadabad in Daragez before me, which of course smoothed matters for me. I procured two suits of Armenian clothes, and a black lambskin hat. I left Ispahan on the 30th of September, dressed as an Englishman, ostensibly to travel in Western Persia, but after marching in that direction about one march and a half, I turned round and steered by compass for Nain, leaving all roads. I had not even told my partner and servant exactly where I was going, as I thought the best way for me to keep the secret was not to let them know. When I came to a desert place I changed my clothes, and threw my hat, which could not be hidden, down a karez or underground canal. I had chosen the character of an Armenian horsedealer from Calcutta because I thought I could sustain that rôle better than any other. I had travelled much in Asiatic Turkey and in Persia, and knew Oriental ways. The Armenians of Calcutta have chiefly come from Julfa in Persia, and it was one of these Armenians that I determined to personate. I dressed just as a well-to-do Armenian would have done. My partner and servant were Armenians who had visited India, and could speak Hindustani. We ordinarily spoke Persian, but if I wanted to say anything private I spoke to them in Hindustani; the bystanders then imagined we were speaking Armenian. If by chance any one who had visited India understood what was passing, which was very unlikely, there would be nothing curious in an Armenian horsedealer from India speaking the language of that country. Any peculiarity in my accent when speaking Persian would be put down to my having learnt it in India. My only fear was that I might chance to meet real Armenian traders, but I knew they seldom visit Daragez, as they are too much afraid of being carried away and sold as slaves by the Turkomans.

The first town I reached was Nain, celebrated for its faience in ancient times, and even now the pottery made in this town is the best manufactured in Persia. I did not enter the town, as I did not yet feel confidence enough in my new dress to face the Persian officials who would probably have interviewed me. I heard that the road from Nain to Tabbas across the Kavir or Great Salt Desert was very difficult, in consequence of the want of water, and that the road, though difficult, was better by Ardakan. I therefore went to Ardakan, which is a place of some 20,000 inhabitants, situated not far from the Kavir or Great Persian Salt Desert. A road leads from Ardakan across the desert, which is used by pilgrims from Southern Persia to the Holy Shrine of Imam Reza at Mash-had. At this season the pilgrim caravans are not very numerous, as the heat in the desert is still very great, and this is the time when there is least water. Rain rarely falls in Southern Persia except in the winter months, and no

rain had fallen in this part of the country for six months, so the *hoaz* or reservoirs for water on the road were generally empty, and water only remained at places where there were natural springs, which were rare and far apart.

Ardakan is surrounded by high walls of the most flimsy description. They look exactly as if they were made of the sort of gingerbread known as "parliament," and they were cut into a serrated pattern at the top, which still further increased their resemblance to gingerbread. These walls are, however, only meant to resist an attack of people unprovided with artillery, so they are sufficient. Ardakan carries on a good trade with India, and many of the people have visited that country in the course of business. I stayed at the caravanserai in this town, and was not recognised in any way. Within a few miles of Ardakan, the desert country commences, and in every direction there is nothing but barren, stony hills, and equally barren plains. Many of these hills are of a peculiar colour. They are generally composed of a hardened clay, and have a curious red appearance, being stained with ferruginous oxide. The explanation of this peculiar colour, I believe to be that each grain of clay of which the mountains are composed is coated with a very thin pellicle of peroxide of iron.

The first march from Ardakan was to a village named Homin, 30 miles over a very desert country. Homin was a pretty little oasis in the desert, watered by a tiny spring. Wherever water can be found, every sort of fruit flourishes; pears, apricots, apples, and walnuts abounded in this place. A very fine variety of ibex is plentiful near Homin. I procured some of the horns, and hope to get the species identified. It is not the ibex of the Himalayas, *Capra sibirica*, the horns being very different. It is, however, similar to a living specimen which I procured in the Sulimani range of mountains on the north-west frontier of India. The wild sheep (*Ovis cycloceros*) is very plentiful, and the Ahu antelope is also found. Homin would be a paradise for a sportsman. It is a cool place even in summer, having an elevation of 6000 feet. It is curious that the other large goat—the markhor (*Capra megaceros*) which is common in the Sulimani Mountains of Afghanistan, is not found here.

I marched from Homin on the 15th of October. The road leads up a great ravine for many miles. I possessed only the three horses we rode, and carried the few things I required in a large pair of saddle bags on my servant's horse. One of my animals got a bad sore back, which delayed me very much. I could not purchase a horse to replace him, and was obliged to hire two donkeys, and though Persian donkeys are wonderful beasts, carrying heavy loads, they delayed me a good deal. I travelled without a guide, and the only water being a short distance off the road in a side ravine, I missed it in the night. As soon as I found I must have passed the water, I went a few hundred yards off the road, and went to sleep in the stony bed of the ravine, after picketing the horses and giving them some food I always carried for them. At dawn, I went back, and found the water, and also the donkeys, who with their driver had lost their way in the night, and only reached the water at the same time that we did.

The road from Yazd to Tabbas joins the road from Ardakan to that place in the ravine just mentioned, a few miles before reaching Doh Kulli, as this small spring of water is called. After watering our horses at the spring, we went on across the same barren country. At 29 miles from Homin we reached a caravanserai in the desert named Rizab, where there was a very small spring of brackish water. Near this place was a deserted village, which had been destroyed many years before by Baluchi marauders from Seistan. This is the furthest

point to which I have heard of Baluchi raids extending, and considering the great distance from Seistan it is wonderful that their raids should extend so far.

The following day we marched 13 miles to the village of Sukand, or Sagand, as it is more usually called. The place is said to derive its name, which means sweet water, from the fact that the water is here really sweet, which is very rare in this part of the country, the water in most places being brackish. Sukand is a poor village, situated in a fort, but has a fine brick caravanserai. The people live by grazing flocks of fat-tailed sheep on the sparse vegetation of the less barren parts of the desert.

The fat-tailed sheep is eminently fitted for living in a desert land. Firstly, it does not require grass, and can live and thrive on sage-bush, and tamarisk scrub, and the few aromatic shrubs which grow here and there in patches in the more fertile spots on the edge of the desert. During the spring and early summer the tail gets very fat; the substance contained in it being something between marrow and fat. During the winter, when snow often covers the ground and there is hardly any grazing, these sheep pick up a very precarious living, the shrubs that they usually subsist on having dried up and partially withered away, but they are able to support themselves on wonderfully little food, the fat of the tail being absorbed into the system and acting as food. The same is also the case with camels, when well fed their humps get enormously fat, and the layers of fat in this part of their bodies act as a reserve of food, being absorbed in their desert journeys. I once examined a really fat camel's hump in a camel-butcher's shop in Baghdad, and the layers of fat were most singular in appearance.

I found the small population of Sukand much excited at the news of the arrival of a large party of raiding Baluchis, who were said to be stopping and plundering caravans between this place and Tabbas. I could get no guide to accompany me, and could hire no donkeys. At last, after great difficulty and on my pointing out that as yet the news was that the Baluchis were on the other side of Pusht-i-Badan, I got a man to go with me as far as the next village, 38 miles off.

I started in the afternoon: the barrenness of the land got worse and worse, the whole country between Sukand and Tabbas can only be described as a terrible desert. At the end of 14 miles there is a fine caravanserai and a ruined village called Illahabad, which had been plundered and burnt by Baluchis twenty-five years ago. Near the village there is a little tamarisk scrub, and the eye is delighted with the sight of the green. There is a well of water at Illahabad, but it is very deep and the water very brackish when obtained, so it is never used by travellers. Sometimes camels and sheep are brought here to graze, but at present they have all been driven away to places where there are forts, for fear of the Baluchis.

Soon after passing Illahabad a small piece of *kavir* or salt desert is passed. Although the whole country I am travelling over is known as *kavir*, that is a misnomer. It is certainly a desert, and some portion is probably surpassed in desolation by no desert track in the world, but only portions of it are true *kavir* or salt desert. This occurs in patches. Some of these, however, are very large, extending to more than 100 miles in length, and 25 to 30 miles in width. The larger tracts of *kavir* are all to the northward. In the southern part of the desert the rainfall is so small that the patches of *kavir* are much less in extent. The *kavir* I am now crossing, though not of great extent, may be taken as a type of salt desert. I will describe one, and point out what I think is the cause of this curious formation.



I believe the whole of the country I am now travelling over was once the bed of a shallow sea. It has every appearance of having been the bed of such a sea. Persians have traditions that it was so, and though of course these traditions are mixed up with incredible fables, still they point to a probable fact. One account says Iran was formerly covered with water, and that King Solomon, by the aid of two deers, or demons, named Ard and Bil, drained off the waters into the Caspian Sea, and that the town of Ardabil in Northern Persia takes its name from these demons who helped King Solomon. Another tradition refers to the kavir alone, which it says was drained on the day Mahommed was born, by a miracle. The mountains bear all the characteristics of strata formed in the bed of a shallow sea or lake. The red colour caused by oxide of iron, and which I mentioned before, is, I believe, a sign of strata so formed.

When the uprising occurred which drained the sea, this desert still remained considerably below the level of the neighbouring Persian highlands, and the rivers continued to drain into it and formed marshes. The waters of all springs and rivers contain salts in minute quantities, but the rivers of Persia are often so salt as to be undrinkable. The salts brought down by the rivers are deposited in the marsh, which thus gets saltier year by year. It dries up during the fierce summer heats, to become a marsh again when the winter floods occur. This process is repeated for ages, and in the course of time the whole soil over which the marsh extends becomes encrusted with salt.

When springs are present on a portion of kavir I have seen the salt extracted in the following manner. The water is made to pass over a considerable piece of kavir until it becomes very strongly impregnated with salt, it is then run down into a shallow basin and allowed to evaporate, leaving a cake of salt nearly a foot thick. In some places cakes of this thickness are lying on the surface without any aid from man, but this is rare. When a comparatively large river forms the marsh the extent of country affected is great, the area of salt marsh depending upon the volume of water brought down.

There are various sorts of kavir, depending upon the soil and the amount of salt. One sort is in ridges, looking as if the ground had been ploughed up, then left fallow for some time, and a glazy coating of salt clay afterwards poured all over it. When this glazy coating is trodden upon it gives way, and the horses' hoof sinks into a powdery sort of soil containing much salt. If this sort of kavir is ridden over, a continued crackling sound is heard, caused by the horses' feet breaking through the glazy surface. At other times the whole surface seems rotten, and the horses' feet sink deeply into it, causing salt to show white on the surface. Sometimes a damp spot is come upon, looking as if it had sweated up from below.

When a tract of salt desert is crossed on a bright moonlight night it has a strange appearance. Persians, who are very superstitious, declare that djins and demons live in these salt deserts, and tell innumerable stories of their appearing to human beings, and of the scurvy tricks they play them. Such a place is well fitted for ghost stories. A strange weird feeling is apt to steal over one, and to beget thoughts of some fabled dragon of old, the crackling soil representing his wrinkled skin, and the damp places seeming to be wetted by his loathsome sweat. Persians firmly believe in demons. A man whom I once sent with a letter to order post-horses did not arrive at the town to which he was commissioned to go, but returned to the place from which he was despatched. On being interrogated as to his return, he declared he had seen two demons on the road, who barred his way and only disappeared at daylight, when they vanished in the form of

wreaths of smoke. A friend of mine suggested that the vision may have been due to spirits of another sort.

After a long desert march of 38 miles without water we reached the miserable village of Pusht-i-Badan. The houses were nearly all in ruins, and the whole place had a most desolate look which was very depressing. Our horses had heavy saddle-bags to carry besides ourselves, and the pony I was riding fell from sheer fatigue, just before reaching the village, though I had rested several hours, and fed him twice on the journey.

At Pusht-i-Badan there are two springs of water, one brackish and the other fresh. From these springs, about a square mile of ground is watered and cultivated, but the place does not supply food enough for its inhabitants and the pilgrims who pass through it on their way to Mash-had. I here found the alarm about the Baluchi band, who were plundering, even greater than at Sukand. I was not aware that Baluchis were so much dreaded by the Persians as they appear to be, though I knew that a Turkoman would scare a multitude of Persians from the southern provinces of the kingdom. After much difficulty I persuaded a man to accompany me as guide to the next stage.

We left Pusht-i-Badan in the afternoon, and after  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles of the usual bare plain, reached a poor little hamlet called Shorab, or salt water, where there is a spring of brackish water and a little tamarisk scrub. It is very curious that this spring contained many fish; all these small springs in Persia do contain fish, which take refuge in the karez or underground channels that convey the water from its source to the surface. Many of the fish which inhabit these channels are blind, living as they do in the dark channels which often run for 30 to 40 miles before they are brought to the surface, from disuse of their eyes they lose their sight.

After passing Shorab, the same desert country is passed over until a low ridge of hills is reached, where there is a fine reservoir for water protected by a tower called Haoz-i-Shah Abbas, but at this season the tank is dry. It is 18 miles from Pusht-i-Badan. This low ridge is the dividing line between Khorasan, the ancient Parthia, and Yazd. After passing Haoz-i-Shah Abbas the desert becomes worse than ever; heretofore it has consisted of solid earth, but here we reach sand-dunes, and the road leads up one and down another, the one so like the other that it is difficult to keep on the right track. It was a lovely moonlight night, and I and my partner pressed on, leaving the guide and donkeys behind. Our progress was very slow indeed, as the horses sank at every step to their fetlocks, and sometimes to their knees, in the loose sand. We were afraid of losing the road. At last, after six miles of sand, we got to a low ridge of hills, which was a great relief to our tired horses, as they had firm ground to walk over. At the end of this ridge, where the road descends again to the plain, there was a small spring of sweet water known as Chasma Shutaran, or the camels' spring. Here there was a deserted tower. I had been specially warned against resting here, as it is the haunt of Baluchis when raiding.

I filled my large leathern water-bottle, which held about a gallon; watered the horses, and went on. As it was still some miles to Robat-i-Khan, and my horses were very tired, although I had already rested them once, I proceeded about half a mile, then turned off the road and found a splendid hiding-place in a ravine, where we could see without being seen. Here I rested for about two hours, until the man with the donkeys came up. He was in a great state of fear, declaring the Baluchis were about. After the animals had rested, we went on through a rather sandy tract of country to Robat-i-Khan, distant 39 miles from our starting-point. Robat-i-Khan is a small

village, strongly fortified with a high tower outside it, and a large caravanserai. There is a spring of brackish water which fills a tank. Some little distance off there is a fine *haoz* or reservoir containing sweet water.

A great many pilgrims were collected in the caravanserai at this place in consequence of the petty official of the Khan of Tabbas, who was stationed here with a few mounted men to guard the frontier of Khorasan, declaring that he had orders to prevent any one going on, as a band of marauding Baluchis had possession of the road a few miles from Robat-i-Khan. I could get no guide and no donkeys to carry the saddle-bags of my horse, which was laid up with a sore back. I had to wait three days here, the people of the place being in great terror, as they declared, of an attack by Baluchis.

I here for the first time saw two men, who, with their wives, had been carried off and plundered by Baluchis. They said that they and their wives, with two other men, were on the road from Kirman to Tabbas, and when eighty miles to the southward of this place they were pounced upon by a band of thirty-seven men, most of them mounted on the swift Seistan camels so celebrated for their speed. They and their wives were stripped of everything but the most necessary clothing, and were carried about on camels for three days. One of their party who knew the country gave offence to the Baluchis by refusing to act as guide, and was hacked to pieces with swords, another of their party was killed by the Baluchis, and they heard that a traveller had been murdered previous to their own capture. At the end of three days the two men whom I met with their wives were released near Chasma Shutaran, the lonely spring in the desert where I filled my water-bottle. They came on to Robat-i-Khan, and were anxious to proceed on their journey.

I here heard of the mode of procedure of these Baluchi marauders. The camels they ride travel very fast. They can go 70 or even 80 miles a day, carrying one or sometimes two men and a little food. The longest distance that I have ever myself known a good trained camel to cover in a day was 92 measured miles on a road. This was accomplished between early dawn and evening, but the camel performing this feat would not have been able to go on the next day for any great distance. This was, however, not a Baluchi camel. The Baluchis, with their trained camels which only require water every other day, and who can on a push last for three days without water, scour the country for incredible distances, lying hidden in some ravine in the desert, and pouncing upon unwary travellers, and driving off camels and cattle wherever found. Sometimes a rich caravan falls into their hands. Their camels can find enough grazing in the less arid spots of the desert, to support life, assisted by a little food supplied by their owners in the form of balls of barley-meal mixed with just enough water to make a paste. A camel can exist in this way for a few weeks only while the foray lasts. The Baluchis only approach some lonely spring in the desert every other day, water their camels, fill their water-skins, and go back to hide in some new spot.

On the second day of my stay here, a man came running in, declaring that as he was gathering assafœtida on the hills above Chasma Shutaran he saw a large body of Baluchis, whom he estimated at sixty, come to the spring, fill their water-skins and go off; and that he had left his assafœtida lying on the ground to run in and give notice.

Assafœtida is produced in great quantities on the edge of this desert. It is a stinking gum which exudes from a desert plant when it is cut. The season for collecting it lasts about eight months, from spring until autumn. A plant can be cut fourteen times in one year,

and the gum which exudes from the wound is carefully collected. The Persians know no use for assafoetida, and asked me what was done with it in India. I said it was used in medicine, and that a very small quantity was employed as a flavouring to certain kinds of food by the natives in India. I was then asked if I had ever tasted food so prepared, and on my answering yes, and that I thought it rather nice, I was looked upon with horror by the bystanders.

After three days' delay I found a camel man named Aly Kuli Khan, of Nain, who declared his determination of proceeding. He was taking a caravan of laden camels from Yazd to Birjand, and he said he would lend me a spare camel for my load. We marched off very secretly, not letting the people of the village know by what road we were going. All the camels' bells were removed and every precaution taken to prevent noise. The padded feet of the camels made no sound. We left the road and travelled all night across country over some very rough ground, crossing a pass difficult for laden camels. We started as soon as it was dark, about half-past six, and did not get in until half-past eight next morning, having taken 14 hours to do 30 miles; but we had got past the Baluchis, or the place where they were supposed to be. The next day we went on to Chardeh, a group of four villages, in the Tabbas district.

The real desert is supposed to terminate at Tabbas, and the immediate neighbourhood of that place is fairly fertile in consequence of a good supply of water. In any other country I should have called Chardeh a very poor place, but there was good water to drink, which, after all the nasty stuff I had swallowed containing various sorts of salts, was a pleasant change. Date palms, which are the commonest trees at Chardeh and Tabbas, are not beautiful, but after seeing no trees at all they are quite refreshing. Much tobacco of a good quality is grown at Tabbas, and exported, besides a small quantity of silk and a great deal of assafoetida. Camels and sheep are numerous in the country northward of Tabbas, towards Mash-had, but nothing at all is produced in the desert country I had travelled over except assafoetida. The group of four villages known as Chardeh, are Jowcar, Tugianum, Tuskinun, and Madiabad, containing altogether about 800 inhabitants.

On the 29th October I rode into Tabbas, which is 10 miles from Chardeh, over a sandy plain. This place, I believe, had not been visited by any Englishmen before my arrival, except by Colonel Macgregor some six years previously, though it has been visited by several Russians, especially those of Khanikoff's mission.

Sir John Malcolm has thrown a sort of halo over Tabbas by his description of it and its ruler in his history of Persia, but it is really a very ordinary town. A portion of it is fortified with a deep ditch and walls, stronger and in better repair than is usual in Persia. The gates are also thickly plated with iron, and though of course not a strong place, it is in better order than most Persian towns, where, if the gate is strong enough to resist being kicked in by a Turkoman's horse, it is considered sufficient. The fortified portion contains about 5000 inhabitants, but the mass of the people live outside. There is a wide street outside the town which has rather a fine appearance. The mass of the population live beyond the walls. The country of Tabbas is ruled by an hereditary governor, who is nevertheless appointed by the Shah, but always from the same family. The present incumbent is named Mahomad Bakhir Khan, and has the title of Imad-ul-Mulk, or Pillar of the State. He is notorious for his stupidity, and many amusing stories are told of him, such as that when he was once trying a horse he called for a looking-glass to see how it looked when galloping, and so forth.

In the town is a very fine minaret, the largest and highest I have ever seen, but it is fast going to ruin. I purchased a mule here to replace my horse that was laid up. I suppose the bigotry of the Mahomedans of Tabbas cannot be equalled except at Riad, the Wahabi capital of Central Arabia. The people see no one, and there is not even the amount of civilisation which would come with a governor appointed from the capital with his following of people, who had seen something of European civilisation.

I had entered the town rather afraid of being discovered to be a European, as I had not yet got quite accustomed to my assumed character as an Armenian, and feared the superior astuteness of townsmen. But I need have given myself no uneasiness on this score. I had only just arrived at the caravanserai when the keeper of it came and said we could not stay there, as it was the khan's or governor's orders that Christians should not be allowed to halt there. If they had known I was an Englishman no doubt they would have received me civilly, but to Armenians or any sort of Christians that they dared to treat in this way they would not give even a lodging. I did not mind this in the least; I had seen all I wanted of Tabbas, and rode back to Chardeh well pleased to find that my disguise was not detected after this I felt quite at home even in a town.

The next day I marched towards Sultanabad, the capital of the Turshiz district. Near Tabbas there are three ranges of mountains:—the Shutari range, the highest peaks of which rise to a height of probably 10,000 feet, the Nastandji, some 2000 feet lower, and the Shorab range lower still. The first march is to Shirghist, about 18 miles. The road passes over a barren, sandy plain, between the Shutari and Nastandji ranges, until near the village, when it runs through an opening of the Shutari.

Shirghist is a very small village with a spring of good water. At the point where the road passes through an outlying spur of the Shutari range, another road branches off to Deh Mahomad and Bajistan. The road from Shirghist runs about 30° east of north, skirting the Shutari Hills for some six miles; then a spur is thrown out from the range which is virtually a continuation of the Shutari, but which is not known by that name. In fact it has no name, but as is usual in Persia, each part of the range has a different name, usually that of the neighbouring village.

Travelling 13 miles a group of small villages is reached, the nearest to the road being Pushna Darun. On the following day I marched over a rather barren country, but far from being desert. About four miles to the left of the road the town of Dasjirdun was seen. From Dasjirdun, which is, I hear, a thriving place, there are roads directly across the desert to both Shahrud and Damghan. This is the desert road from Tabbas to Teheran, and almost all the tobacco which is exported to Teheran is sent on camels by it. My informant, who had travelled by the road, said that it was 12 marches for camels from Tabbas to Damghan. Two of these marches were from Tabbas to Dasjirdun, then follow eight marches of from 20 to 24 miles each, with water at each stage, to a small village called Tahrud, and finally two marches to Damghan. He said horsemen never travelled this road as they could not procure food for their horses. He also said that though much kavir was skirted none was crossed by this road. But by the road from Khur to Samnan or Damghan, he heard there was much kavir, though he had not travelled along it. I passed a flourishing village called Deh Noband at 14 miles distance, and stopped at a wretched little hamlet named Abid, with brackish water a few miles further on.

On the 31d of November I marched to Zangi Chah, a miserable village which produces nothing but assafetida, but has a good caravanserai. Here I saw the largest tract of kavir I have yet seen. It extends, I am told, for more than 100 miles in length, and is some 25 to 30 miles in breadth near here. Fortunately the road does not cross it. A few days previous to my arrival the Baluchis had made a most successful attack on a caravan of 200 laden camels at a place 20 miles from here, and carried off goods to a large amount. The value was stated to be 4400*l*, but that doubtless is an exaggeration. Of the fact of the attack and plunder of this caravan there could be no doubt, as I met, a few days later, great numbers of the poor people who had been plundered of everything and stripped of all but the barest necessary clothing.

The alarm about these Baluchis is great all over this part of the country, and it is very disgraceful and quite unusual that they should be allowed to plunder so far in the interior of Persia as this place. I heard that the 200 stolen camels and the less valuable portion of the goods were recaptured by the Amir of Kaian. None of the people with the caravan were killed. Baluchis very seldom kill: Turkomans almost always kill those they cannot carry off.

I marched the next day to Abdullabad in the Turshiz district, a distance of 34 miles. It was a great pleasure to get into a fertile part of the country again, after all the dreadful desert I had been passing over, and to see green fields and people ploughing. Near Abdullabad is the site of a city called Firozabad. Some minarets which have been covered with various coloured faience are all that remains of the city. The walls and gates can be traced in some places. It was destroyed by the Amir Timour. My next march was through a fertile country to a very flourishing village called Khalilabad, 22 miles distant from Abdullabad. Two small canals from the Shisdras river were crossed at the village of Kundur. This river was said to be situated about four miles away, and called Shisdras because after emerging from the mountains it was divided into six small channels or canals, two of which pass Kundur. Khalilabad produces much silk of a good quality. The mountains to the northward of the Turshiz plain are known as Bejwird Kuh and Siah Kuh, those to the southward as Begou Kuh.

On the 9th of November I reached Sultanabad, the chief town of the Turshiz district. All maps mark a town called Turshiz, but there is no such town, it is only the name of the district. Sultanabad is a small but flourishing town of some 5000 inhabitants, with a good deal of trade, silk and wheat being the chief articles exported. The next day I marched only five miles, to Furk, a village on the edge of the Turshiz district, and the day following 23 miles to Kushdurreh, a very fertile village in the Turbat Hidari district. I crossed the only running stream of water of any size which I had passed since leaving Ispahan. It is situated 18 miles from Furk, and about four miles from the small town of Askand, and is called Askand Rud. The water in the stream even at this dry season is about 50 feet wide. It runs with a rapid current in a course nearly due north and south at the point where the road crosses it. Judging by the width of its bed and the depth to which it was eroded, I should think that in spring it must bring down a large volume of water. It is said to rise in the Derby Mountains, near the Surkh Kuh range, but not from them. It passes through the Siah Kuh range and forms, I am told, a waterfall. It is used up in irrigation near Faizabad, a place to the southward. No doubt the water of this stream, with perhaps some help from the Shisdras stream, is the cause of the great kavir which I saw near Zangi Chah, and which extends towards Faizabad.

I marched to Turbat Hidari, distant 18 miles, on the 13th of November. At Turbat Hidari I got into a comparatively beaten track which has been described by several travellers, so I will not describe the road thence to Mash-had. I marched it in four days and halted a few days near the town. I did not enter Mash-had, but rode past it and got on to the Kuchan or Kabuchan road. This road runs in a valley between two ranges of mountains; those on the left hand are the most lofty, and are called Binalud. The range of mountains on the opposite side of the valley is not nearly so lofty, though one peak, Hazar Masjid, or the thousand mosques, which gives its name to the range, is nearly as high as any peak in the Binalud range.

The first day after passing Mash-had I halted at a village called Kazimabad, 10 miles distant, and the next at Shangullah. The plain over which I am now passing is very fertile indeed, and this part of Khorasan may be looked upon as the granary of Persia. The villages in this neighbourhood are strongly fortified, and the forts are all kept in good repair and not allowed to fall into ruin like so many forts in more peaceful parts of Persia. I here heard of a Turkoman foray having taken place to the south of Mash-had in the district known as Barkharz, 3000 sheep and some 30 of the inhabitants having been carried off, and a captured Turkoman blown from a gun. On the 22nd November, I marched to a small town of about 4000 inhabitants, called Radkan, distant 27 miles. Before reaching this town a marsh is passed which is one of the sources of the Kashaf Rud. This river, after watering the Mash-had country, falls into the Hari Rud. On the edge of the marsh, and about one mile from Radkan, a very curious tower is seen, standing on rather high ground, and probably intended as a hunting tower. It is very lofty, and probably very ancient; constructed of small red bricks, the outside being composed of fluted brick columns, beautifully built. It formerly consisted of three storeys, the flooring of which has fallen in, and had a platform at the top evidently for a look-out. There are no loopholes or openings of any sort except two doors at the bottom. The roof had been of blue encaustic tiles, and an inscription in enormous Cufic letters had run round the building, but though the form of letters could be traced just enough to show in what characters they had been, nothing could be made out of them.

Radkan has a deputy-governor of its own, and is a poor, miserable town. A splendid breed of camels is met with in the district. The Khorasan camel is celebrated for its size and strength. It has very long hair, and bears cold and exposure far better than the ordinary Arabian or Persian camel. The best animals are a cross between the Bactrian or two-humped and the Arabian or one-humped camel. The first cross is by far the best. The load of an ordinary Persian camel is generally 320 lbs., of an Indian camel 400 lbs., but one of the Khorasan breed will carry 600 and even 700 lbs.

In India a wonderful ignorance prevails about camels, and they die by thousands in every campaign. Our natural history books teach us that camels can go without water for long periods, and that they can live on the scanty thorn bushes of the desert. This is far from being the case; camels should be watered at least once a day if possible, and they cannot go more than three days without water, except when trained to do so, and then they suffer much, and many die. A camel which is in good condition, and has a fat hump, will manage with wonderfully little food for a fortnight or three weeks, but if the system of little food is continued much beyond the latter period he simply gets ill and dies. A camel requires nearly as much food as a small horse, though the food may be of coarser quality. He prefers thorny

bushes, twigs and leaves, but when these are not procurable he must have at least 5 lbs. of grain and about 17 lbs of chaff daily, or he very soon dies. Deserts are crossed by camels, but the line of camels' bones along the road attest at what cost to the animals

From Radkan I marched to Dautli, distance 22 miles. the road skirted the hills, just keeping in the plain. The men of Dautli were Turks, they said, brought from Azerbaijan and settled here. I never saw finer specimens of humanity. After this country was almost depopulated by Jenghiz Khan in the 13th century, it remained very sparsely inhabited until Kurds and Turks from the western provinces of Persia were settled here by Shah Ismail and Shah Abbas the Great of the Sufi dynasty, in the 15th and 16th centuries, to act as a barrier against the Turkomans, who then, as now, were the curse of the country.

I here left the Kuchan road, which is 13 miles from Dautli, and turned off towards Daragez. At a distance of eight miles the village of Badkhor is reached. A stream, forming the head waters of the river Atrak, passes Badkhor and runs to Kuchan. The road follows its banks for about two and a half miles, when the village of Towarik is reached; here the road turns away from the stream. I did not follow it up to its source, but it is said to rise in the Hazar Masjid range of mountains, not many miles beyond Towarik, and is acknowledged to be the source of the Atrak. Soon after leaving Towarik the ascent of the Maidan Kuni pass is commenced. The plateau at the top of the pass is known as Maidan Kuni or the Bloody Plateau, from the number of people who perish here during the winter when trying to cross over during the heavy snow. This is the easiest road into the district of Daragez, which is situated across this mountain range; but for weeks in the winter, when there is snow, there is no communication between Daragez and the rest of Khorasan. The other road by Kalat-i-Nadiri is, I am told, worse than this one, and blocked earlier in the winter by snow.

This plateau is the watershed, the rivers of which take their rise on its western side flowing to the Caspian Sea, while those which have their sources on its eastern face are lost in the desert, not even reaching the Tejend. From Maidan Kuni a very good view is obtained of the Hazar Masjid peak, which rises in vast grandeur to a height of 10,500 feet. The Mahommedans say that there are a thousand mosques, one for each prophet who has come into the world. Hence the name Hazar Masjid, or thousand mosques. As soon as the Maidan Kuni plateau is passed, there is a sharp descent, and then there are three small villages of the name of Derbendi, the commencement of the Daragez district; the Maidan Kuni pass separating it from the Kuchan district. From Derbendi I continued to Mahomadabad, the capital of the Daragez district, crossing the Allaho Akbar pass *en route*. The Allaho Akbar is lower than the Maidan Kuni pass, being only 4200 feet high, and it can almost always be crossed without difficulty even in winter. The road is bad to the crest of the pass, after that there is a good hill road. There is a fine view from the Allaho Akbar pass. Several low ranges of hills cross the Daragez plain, but no mountain ranges, while beyond, the Turkoman plain is seen extending away to the blue horizon. In every direction villages and cultivation are seen, showing it to be a fertile land; and every one says, "If we had only peace we should indeed be rich." But in every direction the plain is dotted with towers, as refuges from the dreaded Turkoman.

After descending to the plain the flourishing village of Chapashli is passed. Chapashli is surrounded by vineyards, which are famed all



over the country. Grapes are so plentiful that 45 lbs of the finest can be purchased for ninepence, but there is a reverse to this picture: only eight years ago it was suddenly attacked by a large body of Turkomans, who killed or carried off into slavery more than 300 of the population.

Near the village of Hakwerdi, a little further on, the refuge towers are very close together, every square of 150 yards of the fields having one. In other parts of Khorasan I had seen a few of these towers, but here the whole country is so thickly dotted with them as to look like a chess-board covered with chessmen. The towers are small, round buildings, built of unbaked clay, about 12 feet high. They are roofed over, and have no opening whatever except a small round hole at the bottom, through which a not too stout person may wriggle himself in like a snake. If surprised by Turkomans, the cultivator or traveller creeps through this hole, and closes it with two large stones, which are there for the purpose. Even if these stones are wanting, the occupant is safe, as it would indeed be a daring Turkoman who would try and force himself through the hole, with the certainty of having his brains beaten out with a stone while struggling to get through, even supposing the person inside had no better weapon, but almost every one here goes armed. The defence towers are higher and larger, and have a parapet at the top, with loopholes to fire through, and a ladder for ascending to the top. Each vineyard or orchard has its one or more towers.

I stayed a considerable time in Mahomadabad and other parts of the Daragez, viz from the 25th of November, 1880, to the 15th of January, 1881. I rented a house, and was given a shop in the bazaar, which I accepted but never opened. Mahomadabad is a particularly good place at which to obtain information of the Turkomans, as the Daragez district lies between the Akhal Tekke and Merv Tekke Turkoman country, and the shortest road from one to the other leads through Lutfabad, a town 14 miles from Mahomadabad. In the bazaar there are always numbers of Akhal Tekkes buying and selling, Mahomadabad being the town where they purchase all they require. Askabad, one of their largest settlements, is only two marches off. From the Merv country many caravans come in, and I saw and spoke with many Merv Tekke. I used to wander about the bazaar, conversing with the people. Mahomadabad is a bilingual town, every one speaking both Persian and Turki.

## II

THE Daragez district has a length of some 65 miles, and a breadth of about 40. There is a governor appointed by the Shah, though the appointment is hereditary in one family; he bears the title of Begler Begi, and the people speak of him familiarly as the Khan. His name is Mahomed Aly Khan. He is of Turk descent, as are a large portion of his subjects. There are also many Kurd villages, but it is a distinction to be a Turk.

Nadir Shah, the last king who ruled Persia in its full extent, from Georgia to Kandahar and from the Tigris to the Oxus, was born in a tent of an Iliat, or tent-dwelling family, of the Afshar tribe, about one mile from Mahomadabad. He built a small fort (now in ruins) to mark the place of his birth. At present it is only the wild tribes who plunder Persia, Bokhara, and Afghanistan that are called Turkomans: but the name had once a much wider signification, and there is really no ethnic difference between the civilised Kajar tribe, to which the royal family of Persia belong, and those now called Turkomans.

In the *History of Nadir Shah* called *Jehangosha*, written by Mirza Mehdi Khan Astrabadi, he is always spoken of as a Turkoman of the tribe of Afshar. Nadir Shah himself, in a letter to his son, speaks of having treated the Emperor of Delhi with courtesy when he captured that city, because they were both of illustrious Turkoman descent.

We also know that the Turkomans of the white sheep and the Turkomans of the black sheep—so called from the figures of these animals that they carried on their standards, and who had their respective capitals, the one at Diarbekir in Kurdistan, and the other at Van in Armenia—were of the same race as the nomads of the Kara Kum desert. The Turkomans speak a variety of Turki differing very little from the Turki spoken all over Northern Persia, and the Turks of Persia understand it, though there are some differences. The Persians call the Turki spoken by the Turkomans, *Jagatai*.

The Turkomans inhabit the country between the Caspian Sea and the river Oxus. This country bears no general name, and a great part of it is taken up by the sands of the Kara Kum or Black Sand Desert. It is bounded on the north by the kingdom of Kharezm, or Khiva, and on the south by Persia and Afghanistan. There are a few Turkomans in Afghan territory, and a few also across the Oxus in Bokhara. The country inhabited by the Turkomans is watered by two considerable rivers besides the Amu or Oxus, which bounds it. One of these, the Murghab, takes its rise far away in the Safid Kuh or White Mountains, in Afghanistan, and, after a long course, loses itself in the sands of the Kara Kum Desert. Before doing so, however, it fertilises a long, narrow strip of country on its banks. This tract of country, from the point where the Murghab leaves Afghan territory to the point where it is lost in the desert, has always been celebrated in Eastern history as a most fertile land.

Meru, or Merv, the city on the Murghab, is mentioned in the earliest records of the Aryan race. Balkh, Merv, and Seistan were the places where Iranian history begins. The country watered by the Murghab and Tejend rivers was known to the Greeks as Margiana, and it was visited by Alexander the Great, and Antiochus Nicator ruled on the Murghab. However, we need not dwell on these old-world histories, which I have only alluded to, to show what Merv was long ago. It was the seat of a Christian archbishop of the Nestorian Church during the reigns of the Sassanian dynasty of Zoroastrian kings of Persia, as was also Toos near Mash-had in Khorasan. I was much interested in trying to discover remains of the numerous Christian churches in this country, which the presence of two archbishops would presuppose.

At a village called Julfan, some 12 miles distant from Mahomadabad, a mound was pointed out to me called Tepe Kalisa, or the Kalisa mound, where tradition says a Christian church had stood. I visited the place, and found some ruins, but nothing that could enable me to form a definite opinion as to whether it was a church or not. *Kalisa*, which is only a corruption of *ecclesia*, is never used by these people except for a Christian church. It was curious that the neighbouring village should have borne the name of Julfan, for Julfa on the Araxes, and Julfa the Armenian quarter of Ispahan, are both Christian towns. The people of this village of Julfan said the tradition was that it had been a Christian village, but that it had been destroyed by Jenghiz Khan in the thirteenth century, and that they themselves were Kurds brought from the west to repeople the deserted village. Also in a route kindly furnished to me from Mahomadabad to Mehna, near the Tejend, by Mr O'Donovan, the *Daily News* correspondent, he mentions three villages as Khodja Kalisi, Akmanat Kalisi, and Kara Khan Kalisi. I cannot help thinking that all these places have taken their

names from the ruins of Christian churches being situated near them. They are between Kahka and Mehna on the Persian border. It would be very interesting to search for the ruins, and find out if this was the case.

The Arabs captured Merv about A.D. 666, and found it a very rich city. Until this time it had a Christian archbishop. At the time of the Arab conquest the Salor and Saruk tribes of Turkomans were in the country. The lieutenants of the Khalifs of Baghdad ruled Khorasan with Merv as their capital. I have not space to enter into the history of Merv in the time of Sultan Sangar.

On the 25th of February, 1221, Merv was besieged by a Mogul army, under Tului, a son of Jenghiz Khan, the place was captured, and the population put to death with very few exceptions. It is said by Ibn-ul-Ether that 700,000 dead bodies were counted. This is probably an exaggeration, but it shows how large a city Merv must have been that a writer could suggest that 700,000 people were put to death in it. The Moguls had a curious and methodical way of numbering the slain. When a thousand dead had been completed, they placed one body with its head buried in the ground and its feet upwards, so that the thousands might be conveniently counted.

The last Merv was the city so bravely held by Bairam Ali Khan Kajar. A branch of the Kajar family who now rule Persia had been placed in Merv by Shah Tamasp to defend this outlying province, as they were renowned for their courage. During the troubles that followed the death of Nadir Shah, Merv was attacked and captured from the Persians by Begge Jan, called also Amir Masum, the Amir of Bokhara, in 1784. Bairam Ali Khan was slain outside the town, and his son Mahomad Hussain Khan, who made a glorious defence—even the women joining in it—was carried captive with the population that were spared, to Bokhara. Since that date there has properly been no such town as Merv. The Merv country still exists, but there is nothing worthy the name of town there. The Amir of Bokhara broke down the great dam on the Murghab which filled the numerous canals and fertilised the whole country, in the hope of rendering it a desert inaccessible to Persia. After 1784 it belonged to Bokhara for some years, and the Salor and Saruk Turkomans encamped on it. It was subsequently taken from the Amir of Bokhara by the Khan of Khiva, whose officials were found here living in a poor village called Merv when the place was visited by Abbott early in 1840. This place, which was a possession of the Saruk tribe, and which is described by Abbott as consisting of about 100 mud huts, has been destroyed by the Tekke Turkomans, who began to settle in this country about 1830, and finally drove the Saruks further up the Murghab to Yulutan and Panj Deh. I have not been able to discover the date of the destruction of this last and most wretched of the places which have borne the name of Merv, but it was probably about 1855. This deserted place was occupied by Persian armies in 1857, under Sultan Murad Mirza Hissam-i-Sultunat, and again in 1860 by Hamza Mirza Hashmat-ud-Dowlah, whose army was disastrously defeated in an attack on Kala Kaushid Khan, then only just commenced and in a very rudimentary state. The Tekke Turkomans have possessed themselves of the best part of the country. They have built a large fort on the eastern bank of the most westerly branch of the Murghab. It is situated 25 miles below the great *band* or dam which divides the Murghab into many canals or branches. The place where the great *band* is situated is known as Benti. Here is also Allahsha, where there is a ferry over the Murghab, which is used for a few weeks in the spring when the river is in high flood; at other times there are wooden bridges.

The fort of Kaushid Khan, which is very strong indeed, is protected by the Murghab river on two sides, being built in a loop on the river. It is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and  $1\frac{1}{4}$  wide. The Tekke have most wonderful confidence in the strength of this place, which will contain, they say, 50,000 alajaks or Turkoman tents. It is called Kala Kaushid Khan, from the name of its founder, Kaushid Khan, the chief of the Beg clan of the Tekke tribe. It was commenced in 1860, and the Tekke have worked at it by fits and starts ever since.

When the Persians now speak of Mour or Merv they mean Kala Kaushid Khan. Turkomans themselves never speak of Mour as a town, when they use the term at all they mean the district where Merv was formerly situated. The fact of the Persians speaking of Merv as a town, and as a place captured by their armies, has led to endless confusion. There is no sign of a town about Kala Kaushid Khan. There are about 6000 tents of the Beg tribe generally pitched near it, and each chief man has a guest-house of mud or sun-burnt brick, but they themselves live either in felt tents, or in places where reeds are plentiful, in reed or mat-huts, which can be carried away on camels. Near Kala Kaushid Khan there is a boys' school, with five or six houses for the mollahs or priests who teach in it, belonging to Mollah Turah, the chief mollah of the Beg tribe. A market is held on the river bank, near the fort, and here the Jew traders who frequent the place, each trader being under the protection of some powerful Turkoman, have built small open enclosures without any roofs, where they expose their goods for sale on the two days in a week when a market is held.

When Persians speak of the bazaar of Merv they mean this open market place. Inside the fort some alajaks are pitched, and the family of Kaushid Khan have a guest-house there. The fort, however, is kept more as a place of refuge than as an ordinary habitation. From what I could gather, the portion of country fit for cultivation is about 90 miles long and extends to about 11 miles on each side of the river. The ground is very fertile and produces melons and water-melons in plenty, and of great excellence. Melons constitute one of the exports to Daragez, both fresh and dried. Even in Mash-had the melons of Merv are much liked, and are sent by rich people as presents to one another.

General Abbott, who visited the country in 1840, says, 'The profusion of water renders the soil productive, but it has not strength to bear any but the poorer sorts of grain.' In a previous paragraph he says, 'During the misrule and anarchy of the past sixty years the ancient dam of the Murghab was neglected and carried away. The dam is again set up and the lands are brought under culture.' I gather from this that the dam had not long been repaired when Abbott saw it. Every one knows that in Eastern lands the sandy desert is soon rendered fertile by the silt brought down by the rivers when it is irrigated, and relapses into desert when unirrigated. For the first few years after cultivation these desert tracts are poor, but they soon improve. Vambéry makes this remark of some lands on the other side of the Oxus, but it equally applies in the present case. I can only suppose that the land has again been rendered fertile by the silt brought down by the Murghab, for all Turkomans and Persians who have visited it agree in saying that the Merv country is now a most fertile land. We have an instance, familiar to many of us, of desert being fertilised, in the inundations of the Nile. In Egypt, where the irrigating canals do not reach there is desert; so it is in the Merv country.

I will now leave the Murghab river and describe the Hari Rud or Tejend. The Tejend river has a longer course than the Murghab, and

risers far away in Afghanistan, in fact, I believe that some of its head waters are situated in the western slopes of the Koh-i-Baba, near Kabul, but of this I speak with some doubt. The river passes near and waters the Herat plain. After passing the Afghan fortress of Ghurian it turns northward, and from Toman Agha to Sarakhs forms the boundary between Persia and Afghanistan. As a matter of fact, very little is known of the river between Toman Agha and Pul-i-Khatun, as this portion of the country is so infested by Turkoman bands that it is very seldom visited by any one else. From a few miles beyond Sarakhs both banks of the Tejend are Turkoman.

Many small streams from the mountain ranges of Daragez and Kalat-i-Nadiri run towards the Tejend, but none of them reach that river. I believe that in former times they did fall into it, but that now they are diverted for irrigation and are lost in the desert before reaching the Tejend. The Tejend was described by a friend of mine, who crossed it near Mehna, as being ordinarily fordable at all points below Sarakhs. In the spring, from the melting of the snows in the mountains, it is for a short period unfordable. He said that when he crossed it last February the water reached to his horse's stomach. The river bed was sunk about 12 or 15 feet below the level of the surrounding country. Immense quantities of driftwood covered its banks, and at each angle of the stream trees grew in abundance. There was little or no grass when he saw it in winter, but he said no doubt there would be plenty in the spring and summer. The Kashaf Rud, which passes near Mash-had, falls into the Tejend, and is one of its most considerable affluents.

The country bordering the Tejend has never played the same part in history as the Merv country. The only town of much importance on it in ancient times was Syrinx. In modern times Sarakhs, a town situated on the eastern bank of the river nearly opposite the present Persian fort of the same name, which is situated on the western bank, was a town of considerable importance. It was destroyed in 1830 by Abbas Mirza, the Persian Crown Prince, and many of the inhabitants killed; the remainder were carried away captive and settled by the Prince within the Persian border, but as they made themselves disagreeable to the Merv Tekke by giving notice of raids, they were all carried away by them, whether with their own consent or not. I was not able to ascertain, and distributed among the Tekke in the Merv country. The whole Salor Tribe do not now number more than 5000 tents. The Tejend, like the Murghab, is finally lost in the sands of the Kara Kum Desert.

Formerly a great deal of the country now desert, between the Tejend and the Murghab rivers, was cultivated by means of canals from the Tejend, and these canals used to reach as far as Kucha Kum in the desert, rendering the journey much easier than it is at present.

I will now give an approximate estimate of the strength of the Turkoman tribes. This is pretty well known, as they are often mustered in war, and each tribe has a pretty accurate idea of its fighting strength, which may be considered as one fighting man for each tent.

Akhal Tekke in Daman-i-Kuh, now belonging to Russia	25,000 tents.
Merv Tekke on Murghab and a few on Tejend river,	40,000 "
Salor (5000 tents) but included in Merv Tekke.	"
Saruk at Yulutan and Panj Deh on Murghab river	11,000 "
Total . . .	<u>76,000</u> "

The number of inhabitants per tent may be taken as five. This

will give for the Daman-i-Kuh and Merv country a population of 380,000, and I do not think this is an excessive estimate.

Besides the above, there are Eyrsari Turkomans on the left bank of the Oxus, who may be reckoned at 75,000 tents, or 375,000 persons.

These are all the Turkoman tribes of which I have any personal knowledge. I will, however, just mention the other chief tribes.—

Yomuts, near the Caspian Sea and Atrak rivers.

Chowdur, near Caspian Sea and Khiva.

Goklan, near Atrak river.

Kara, in desert beyond Murghab

Alhehli, near Andkhai, in Afghanistan, and also at Abiverd and Khaka in Persia.

Of these tribes I can give no estimate that would be worth having; I did not come in contact with them except with some of the Alhehli, many of whom have settled near Abiverd and Khaka within the Persian border; they are none of them powerful except the Yomuts.

I will now describe the country inhabited by the Akhal Tekke tribe: this is called Daman-i-Kuh, or skirt of the hills. It now forms a part of the new Trans-Caspian province of Russia. It is rather a bare strip of country, bordering the range of mountains which form the boundary of Khorasan on the north. Though it is not a rich country, it is far from being a desert, there are many small streams which run down into it from the mountains, and enable the plain to be cultivated. It extends from Kizil Arvat to Gawars. The small streams are soon lost in the desert, and beyond their influence there is no cultivation.

The new capital of the Trans-Caspian province of the Russians has been fixed at Bami, in the Akhal Tekke country, and a railway is being constructed from Mikhailovsk on the Caspian to Bami. The best proof that this country is not desert is, that it supported a population estimated at 25,000 tents or families, or 125,000 souls, and that these people were able to keep up a large number of horses of a very good breed; sheep are also kept in this tract in very large numbers. The fisheries of sturgeon and other fish for caviar on the Caspian coast of the new province are valuable. Petroleum is found, and when bored for, will no doubt be produced in as great quantities as at Baku on the opposite coast of the Caspian. The island of Cheleken, near Mikhailovsk, produces not only petroleum, but mineral wax in large quantities, which is a very important and valuable product.

In a rough way the Tekke Turkomans have a knowledge of the arts. They manufacture carpets that cannot be surpassed or equalled in Persia, and are similar to the ancient Persian carpets which fetch so large a price, and cannot now be made in Persia. They have powder mills worked by water-power which turn out very good gunpowder; and they are clever in manufacturing false Persian money, with which they flood the bazaar in Mahomadabad. Their felts, and the rough cloth they manufacture from sheep's wool, are far superior to any made in Persia; and they also make a stuff that looks something like alpaca, only thicker, which fetches a high price. Aniline dyes, which are ruining the Persian carpets, have not yet reached the Turkomans, and as the materials they use are good, the carpets last almost for ever. In fact, everything the Turkomans make, except their money, is thoroughly good.

My stay in Daragez was rather eventful; on some five occasions I heard the call from the top of the mosque, 'Turkomans! Turkomans! mount and away!' which is the call for the Governor's cavalry to mount and proceed in hot haste in pursuit of bands of these marauders.

who were carrying off slaves or cattle. No one in England has any conception of the fearful sufferings of this slave trade carried on by the Turkomans. I believe the number of slaves in Bokhara, Khiva, and the Turkoman country itself a few years since amounted to more than 100,000. Of course it is difficult to gather statistics on such a point, but 40,000 slaves are said, I do not know with what truth, to have been released by the Russians in Khiva alone. The value of slaves has fallen considerably since the Russians have closed the slave markets in Khiva and Bokhara. The Persian slaves in Bokhara have not been released, but the open sale of captives there has been prohibited, and though a few slaves, especially women, can still be secretly sold in Bokhara, Russia has struck a great blow at the Turkoman slave trade. The noble deed performed by that Power in releasing the numerous slaves in Khiva has added very much to her influence in this part of Persia. In almost every village I met liberated slaves, who spoke of the kindness of the Russians in freeing them. Great numbers of the freed slaves were killed by the Turkomans on their return journey from Khiva.

Formerly the great slave-catching place was on the caravan road between Teheran and Mash-had near Miandasht. From this neighbourhood many slaves were carried off, often people of good family. An Indian princess was so captured, and I believe died in consequence of the ill-treatment she received. The suffering of the poor slaves while being carried off is terrible, as they are lashed on a horse's back behind their captors, often wounded while being taken prisoners, and are allowed very little rest, night or day, until they reach the Turkoman tents. They are then heavily ironed, a ring being passed round the neck and one round each leg. From these rings there are chains fastening the legs together, and a long chain from the neck ring which is fastened to a tent-peg. I saw prisoners fastened in this Turkoman manner at Mahomadabad.

Women slaves are preferred. Imagine the feelings of a young woman of good family, torn from her friends and relations (probably after seeing her husband killed in defending her), and carried ruthlessly away. She who has never even showed her face, is stripped and offered for sale. Fortunate for her if she is not pretty, for then her friends may be able to ransom her. If beautiful, her captor will probably not part with her at any price. I am not painting a picture, but depicting scenes of almost daily occurrence.

The presence of the Russians across the Atrak has rendered the road from Teheran to Mash-had now safe, but slave-hunting is still carried on in Daragez and the country on the east of Khorasan. Though the closing of the slave trade in Bokhara and Khiva has lowered the price of slaves they are still valuable for work in the Turkoman country and for ransom by their friends.

The Turkomans almost always kill all they cannot carry away captive. If pressed in pursuit they cut off either the hands or feet, or both, of the captives and then leave them. I know of a well authenticated case of their doing this to a number of their captives.

At the end of December I heard that the Begler Begi, or Governor, was going on an expedition into his district in the direction of Askabad. I asked leave to accompany him, and he permitted me to do so. We started with an escort of about fifty cavalry and stopped the first night at a village called Nakundan, about nine miles from Daragez. Here I had long talks with more liberated slaves from Khiva. They said their treatment had been good when once they reached their owner's hands, but the journey was terrible. The next day I visited Julfan and Tepe Kalissa, or the church-mound which I have before spoken of.

I turned back from near a village called Tojanlu, about 15 miles from Mahomadabad, and went and met the Begler Begi at a shrine to the left of the road, where he had been paying his devotions. He told me he had received news that 6000 Tekke Turkomans were on their way to Yangi Shahr, or Geok Tepe as it is called in Europe, and that he was most anxious, as he feared they would plunder some of his frontier villages *en route*. He said he must return that day to Mahomadabad, and that he had summoned every available mounted man in his district to meet the expected inroad. We returned to Mahomadabad, and the next day the Begler Begi, having collected some 400 cavalry, started for Lutfabad.

Lutfabad, sometimes also called Babagek, is a small town in the Atak country. The plain country is called Atak, it is well watered and very fertile, but dreadfully harried by the Turkomans. It forms a portion of Daragez, and the deputy governor is a brother of the Begler Begi named Syd Aly Khan.

I was hospitably entertained by Syd Aly Khan, as was also Mr O'Donovan, the *Daily News* correspondent, who had also accompanied the Begler Begi. I had by this time made myself known to Mr O'Donovan as an Englishman. For about three weeks, though I had seen him constantly, he believed me to be an Armenian, and always called me Khwaja Ibrahim, the name which I had adopted. One day he said to me, "Really, Khwaja Ibrahim, you speak English wonderfully well for an Armenian." I kept my countenance and said, "Oh, we Armenians of Calcutta receive a very fair education." It is certainly a great feat in newspaper enterprise to maintain a correspondent in so good a position to obtain news of what is happening in the Turkoman country. Mr O'Donovan is at present a prisoner in the Merv country,\* but he is in no danger, and will doubtless be in a position when he returns from his wonderful journey to give us valuable information. I did not much fear detection by a European, but I was really afraid of Mr O'Donovan's servant. This man was a Persian, who made it a business to travel about with Englishmen new to the country, in which capacity he had served many, and he even spoke a little English. I had no cause, however, to fear this man's penetration, for one day he came to my servant and said, "How is it that your master knows the price of things in Persia so well; he has told my master and now I cannot make any profit out of him. I hear there is an English colonel coming from Ispahan to Mash-had, I shall go and serve him." The English colonel was myself. This man, who was afterwards in Captain Gill's service, told him he never suspected me.

Every one at Lutfabad held himself ready to turn out at a moment's notice in case one of the villages on the frontier close to Lutfabad should be attacked by the 6000 Turkomans. The Begler Begi declared he had 500 cavalry, although I thought myself he had not more than 400. But he was very anxious, and my private opinion was that if anything like 6000 Turkomans had appeared his cavalry would have made a strategic movement—and a pretty rapid one too—to the rear. In view of such an eventuality I was mounted on the best horse I had, a large grey Turkoman which I had purchased.

During the day we had horse races just outside the town. Our fighting powers, however, were not put to the test, for on the second day we heard that the Turkomans had marched on to Geok Tepe, keeping just outside the Persian border. The Begler Begi was quite radiant, and I saw that a great weight had been lifted off his mind.

\* While this is passing through the press, telegraphic news has been received of Mr O'Donovan's release and return to Mash-had.



Though I had met and conversed with plenty of Turkomans both in Mahomadabad and Lutfabad, where there are numbers, I had never yet entered a real Turkoman village. The Begler Begi suggested that we should visit some of the villages within his border inhabited by Turkomans. We started the next morning. It was a fine day, and everybody seemed relieved by the impending attack from the Turkomans having been avoided. The whole plain was covered with high mounds, each one the remains of a fort or village, many of them crowned with ruins. Only a few of these places are now inhabited. The population of most of them have been carried into slavery or slain, as the escort of the Begler Begi said, "Every foot in this country is stained with blood." On the road we passed a piece of swampy ground where two years before the Begler Begi had attacked with 700 cavalry a party of 800 Turkomans led by his own cousin, Dowlut Murad Khan. The Turkomans after some fighting had fled, and in their flight had got into a swampy piece of ground, from which they were not able to extricate their horses, 250 were killed and 53 taken prisoners. The heads of the slain were skinned and the skins sent to the Shah, who pays a reward of five tomans (a little under 2*l*) for the head of each Turkoman killed raiding within his frontier. The prisoners were ransomed for various sums—from 30 tomans or 1*l* up to 100 tomans or 37*l*. I saw a few who were too poor to ransom themselves still in prison at Mahomadabad.

The largest and most conspicuous mound was called Khusru Purwez, and the town which formerly existed here was said to have been built by Khusru Purwez, who was king of Persia in A.D. 591. There were houses on it still, but I was told by the Begler Begi that these were quite modern, built within his own recollection. The place is deserted, as are so many others in the neighbourhood. It would be most interesting to dig here, but great difficulties would have to be overcome before that could be done, as there would be great risk of capture by Turkomans if labourers remained at night, and the Persian Government is very jealous of all excavations.

A very large population must have formerly inhabited this rich plain, which is well watered and only requires peace to become most flourishing again.

The Begler Begi, finding it impossible for a Kurd or Turk population to exist in these frontier villages, has persuaded a number of Tekke and other Turkomans to occupy the deserted villages along the border, and it was to some of these we were now bound. As we rode along we put up many pheasants from the thorny scrub we were passing through. I do not know the botanical name of the bushes, but the plant is called *jowassa* in India. One of the pheasants was pursued by three or four of our escort, and after the third flight allowed itself to be taken by hand. It was just like an ordinary English pheasant, but had a little white on the wings. The Governor told me that sometimes as many as 100 are captured in a day in this way.

We first visited the Turkoman village of Hissar, and then proceeded to Makdum, 11 miles farther, also a Turkoman village, where we halted to lunch.

The Turkomans, who never repair any buildings, were living among the ruins of the houses, some in regular alajaks made of felt, others in tents made of mats. I went into the tents, the women were dressed just like the Turk women of this part of the world, except that they did not wear a veil. They had a profusion of silver coins hanging round their necks. A very handsome carpet was spread for me, and I was begged to repose.

The tents are well worthy of description. They are composed of

a framework of poles all round, with rods running to a central piece of wood like a cart-wheel. This central hole is intended for the escape of the smoke. The framework, which is easily taken to pieces, is covered with thick felts, a special piece being drawn over the opening at the top when it rains or snows. The fire burns in the middle of the floor; ropes pass over the tent and fasten it down to the ground. Outside, a strong piece of matting or a reed screen, known in India as a *chick*, is bound round as high as the walls to give stability to the whole. Those who have lived much in tents, as I have done, must remember what an inconvenience the pole in the centre of a tent is. In this kind of tent there is no pole in the centre; and all ridge poles, which are constantly breaking in ordinary tents, are also avoided.\*

After spending a short time in the tents, I went and joined the Governor, who asked me to lunch. The meal consisted of pilaf of rice and boiled mutton. I wanted to go on towards Abiverd, but the Begler Begi declared we could not, as he was still afraid of Turkomans, and that we must get back to Lutfabad before sunset. Abiverd was nine miles off, and I took the bearings of it, also of the hill on which Kalat-i-Nadiri was situated, 42 miles off.

Close to Makdum is the Turkoman village of Kussowlie. We returned by another road, passing the Turkoman village of Mehni, not a Tekke village, but inhabited by Turkomans from near Khiva; then through the rich land of the poor little village of Chilian. Here there were fine trees and gardens, although the village was most miserable. The poor people, who are not Turkomans, hardly dare move about for fear of capture, as Chilian is one of the most exposed places. We got back to Lutfabad before sunset.

Some Alhehli Turkomans have settled near Abiverd, and I saw a chief man of theirs who came to meet the Begler Begi, mounted on one of the best Turkoman horses I have seen.

Before leaving this place, I must say a few words about these horses. During the time that I resided in Daragez I examined several hundred Turkoman horses in my character as horse-dealer, as the Begler Begi permitted me to look over all his cavalry horses with a view to purchase. On various excuses, I purchased as few as I could, but was obliged to buy some to sustain my character.

These horses are not prepossessing at first sight; they are decidedly leggy, long in the back and long in the neck, but they improve on further acquaintance; and when the wonderful feats of endurance they can perform are seen one learns their true value. Most grossly exaggerated statements of the feats performed by Turkoman horses, however, are current.

I do not consider them fast; their best pace is a quick walk; they also have a long, cantering pace; they never trot. I have heard of their accomplishing the distance from Kala Kaushid Khan to Mashhad, about 200 miles, in three days, carrying all that the rider and horse required as food on the way; also from Kala Kaushid Khan to Khiva, 360 miles, in six days, doing the same. I have heard of a Turkoman horse covering about 100 miles in 24 hours, carrying his rider, body-clothing, etc. I believe a really good horse will do 60 miles a day for several days together, eating very little food; but anything beyond this is pure fiction. There are no milestones in the desert, and all Orientals are prone to exaggeration.

If I was asked to point out a distinguishing feature of the Turkoman breed of horses, I should say their greatest peculiarity was their

\* Two models of these tents, made on the scale of one inch to a foot, were exhibited by Colonel Stewart.



TURKOMAN CAMP



hairlessness. They have naturally very little mane, and what they have is always carefully cut off. Their tails are generally scanty. The skin is very soft and thin, and the hair on it very fine indeed. If a patch of hair is rubbed off it only grows again very slowly, and if rubbed off more than once it often does not grow again at all. Bare, hairless patches are common, especially behind the saddle where saddle-bags are usually carried. They are never stabled, but picketed out in the open. The greatest care is taken of them, and they are well clothed. First a thick felt body-covering is put on, of the size an English horse wears; over this an immense piece of felt is fastened, covering the horse's ears and his whole body down to his hocks. This clothing is secured with a long roller, which is passed three times round the body.

However little clothing a Turkoman may take for himself, he always takes the full clothing for his horse; generally for himself he takes nothing but a long sheepskin coat, called a *poshtin*, and he will sleep even in snow with nothing but this. Certainly, Turkomans are a very hardy race, and when on their *alamans*, or raids, manage with wonderfully little clothing. Their horses, when in their *oubahs*, or camps, are fed on barley and chopped straw. On a foray they have nothing but the bushes or sometimes rough grass, which they can pick up; but some grain is always given them once a day. I made inquiries as to the barley-meal and sheep's-tail-fat balls which the Turkomans are said to give their horses. The people I saw were not accustomed to give their horses this mixture, but flour and sheep's-tail-fat, or clarified butter, are given all over the East to horses when required to support great exertion; so there would be nothing extraordinary in a Turkoman occasionally giving it. I myself, in India, have often given my horses a pound each of flour and coarse sugar and half a pound of clarified butter made into balls, when I have ridden them far and wanted them to go on again. This is, I believe, easily digested by the horse, and he is ready to start sooner than if a feed of corn is given him, and it is supposed to give great strength. The Turkoman horses are sometimes given an opium pill when they are required to make a great effort.

Turkomans give their horses almost anything they eat themselves. A Turkoman horse belonging to the Governor of Daragez, he assured me, would eat the boiled rice of a pilaf. This is rice over which melted butter has been poured. Though hardy in respect of food, the horses require a good deal of care as to clothing; their very fine coats and fine skins, when at all well bred, predisposing them to catch cold during the winter season.

The Turkomans, as a race, are very impatient of control, and have no regular chiefs for internal affairs, but in times of war and for external affairs they have chiefs who exercise a certain amount of power. In the Akhal Tekke country during the war almost despotic power was exercised by Mukdum Kuli Khan, he having even cut off the hands of people who disobeyed his orders.

All Tekke Turkomans, whether of the Akhal or Merv country, are divided into four clans, known as Wakil and Beg, Suchmuz and Bukshi. Tekke means wild goat. The word Tekke also is applied to the old he-goat that leads a flock of goats. The Wakil and Beg clans are collectively called Toctamish, as they are descended from a person of that name. The Suchmuz and Bukshi clans are collectively called Otamish, as their ancestor bore that name. In the Merv country the Wakil and Beg clans live on the eastern side of the Murghab; the Suchmuz and Bukshi on the western side. The Wakil and Beg are the two most powerful clans. The Wakils have the first right to the

water from the Murghab. Their canal, or branch, of the Murghab from the dam at Benti must be filled first. Each clan is divided into many families, and these families have each a person called a *khetkhoda* who acts for the family in matters of policy, but he can only act according to the wishes of the clan. I do not know the exact number of *khetkhodas* in the Merv country. I believe there are 24, but there may be more.

In some of the clans one family has rendered itself more powerful than the others. In the Beg clan the family of Kaushid Khan, who persuaded the Turkomans to unite to build the fort, have most power, and its chief representative is now Baba Khan, a son of Kaushid Khan. In the Wakil clan the family of Noor Verdi have rendered themselves most powerful; and while one son of his, Mahomad Yusuf Khan, is the most important person of the Wakil clan, in the Merv country his other son, Mukdum Kuli Khan, was the chief of the Akhal Tekke. In the Suchmuz and Bukshi clans there are several men of great influence, still no families have attained to such power as the families of Kaushid Khan and Noor Verdi Khan have in the other divisions. In times of danger the *khetkhodas* elect some person, who by family influence and determination of will obtains paramount power for a time, but Turkomans are too independent and free to allow him to retain it when the danger is past. Mukdum Kuli Khan, the chief of the Akhal Tekke tribe, was an instance of this supreme power being invested in an individual for a time.

At two long days' march from Kala Kaushid Khan is situated a settlement of the Salor Turkomans, called Yulutan, where there are some 4000 tents of that tribe, and a very imperfect dam over the Murghab; and five marches further up the Murghab, beyond the junction of the Kushk stream, is situated within the Afghan territory the chief settlement of the Saruk tribe, called Panj Deh, consisting of 7000 tents.

The Saruk would act with the Tekke in any external affairs, but are not very friendly in ordinary times, as they have been ousted from some of their best lands by the Tekke. For some years there has been peace between these tribes.

I will now give a short description of the roads from Persia to the Merv country.

There are many roads. Firstly, the most northern road from Lutfabad to Kala Kaushid Khan, *via* Chungul, which is usually done by camels in eight days, but I have known a laden caravan of camels arrive even at Mohomadabad in six days; a second road goes by Mehna, in the Kalat-i-Nadiri district; a third by Kara Chacha, in the same district; a fourth is from Mash-had, *via* Sarakhs, to Kala Kaushid Khan, ten marches for laden camels.

All these roads are traversed by caravans, but are difficult; and from the Tejend river to where the first canal from the Murghab is reached, a space of some 85 miles has to be passed over, either without water at all, or on some of the roads there are wells of brackish water at about 66 miles after passing the Tejend. The only easy road to the Merv country, without constructing a canal, is from Herat and up the Kushk stream to its junction with the Murghab. In former days, Herat as well as Merv belonged to Persia, and this road was much used. Also in former days canals from the Tejend near Sarakhs ran out a long way into the desert and made the journey by Sarakhs a comparatively easy one, which it certainly is not now. There are still water reservoirs and caravanserais in ruins on this road, showing where the old road to Merv ran.

A canal which formerly existed, and which led from the Tejend river

near Sarakhs to Kacha Kum, could easily be reconstructed. Kacha Kum is a halting place for caravans, and has several wells of brackish water. A canal can still be traced from the Tejend to this place, and in 1860 Hamza Mirza Hashmat-ud-Dowlah, the Persian general, employed his army for a few days in damming up the Tejend and turning it into the bed of the old canal. His efforts were successful, and the water ran for many miles in the bed of the old canal and supplied his army for several days. The water did not reach so far as it formerly did, but only to a place called Kurk Tepe, or the Wolf's Mound; still this was an immense assistance. A little more time and a little more engineering skill would no doubt have sent the water as far as it formerly went, to Kacha Kum, from whence it is only about 20 miles across the desert to the first canal from the Murghab.

I returned to Mahomadabad on the second of January by a different road from that by which I came to Lutfabad, and on the 14th of January left Mahomadabad on my return journey to Mash-had. I never crossed the Persian border from Daragez, and only adopted an Asiatic dress that I might move about unrestrained and mix with the people freely. I returned by Nishabur, Subzawar, Teheran, and the Caspian Sea to England, which I reached on the 24th of April, passing Baku on my Caspian route.

Baku, which I remembered as quite a small place, has now more than 30,000 inhabitants, and it has, I believe, a great future before it. The unlimited supply of petroleum, which is here found, is a mine of wealth. As soon as railways are made I believe that Baku will supply the world with petroleum. The price is now only a halfpenny per pood of 36 lbs. on the spot, and the supply is practically unlimited. All the steamers on the Caspian already use it as fuel instead of coal, and I believe the use of petroleum as fuel will soon be extended to the railways also. Some locomotive engines already burn petroleum.

*(Here followed discussion on paper).*

## APPENDIX II

### ON THE USE OF PETROLEUM AS FUEL IN STEAMSHIPS AND LOCOMOTIVES, BASED ON ITS EMPLOYMENT IN THAT WAY ON THE CASPIAN SEA AND IN THE TRANS-CASPIAN REGION.

BY

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COLONEL STEWART: I have just returned from Baku on the Caspian Sea, where I was employed by the London Chamber of Commerce and the Petroleum Association to attend a conference on the subject of petroleum that had been assembled at Baku by the Russian Government. I am perfectly well aware that experiments have been made, and successful experiments too, on the use of petroleum as fuel in England, but my remarks are based entirely upon what has been done in Russia. The Russians have advanced beyond the experimental stage, and have actually used petroleum fuel in a very large measure in their mercantile marine and navy.

THE subject of the paper which I am about to read to you is one in which I have been much interested for many years. I visited Baku on the Caspian Sea, the headquarters of the petroleum industry of Russia, first in 1866, twenty years ago. I then carefully inspected the petroleum refineries, which at that time were only two in number, though now they are nearly one hundred. In 1866 there were very few railways in Russia, and the difficulty of reaching the Caspian Sea was considerable. On that occasion I spent six months' furlough from my regiment in India in riding from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea, and, after visiting Baku, went up the Volga to the fair at Nijni-Novgorod, and then travelled to England by Moscow and St Petersburg. At present this is a very easy journey, often adopted by travellers from India, but at that time it was by no means so easy.

A trip from London to Baku can now be taken without any difficulty by rail to Odessa and then across the Black Sea to Batoum, and from Batoum to Baku *via* Tiflis by railroad. Otherwise by rail to Vladikafkas at the foot of the Caucasus, then by diligence over the Darial Pass to Tiflis, then by train to Baku. This is the quickest way, and can be accomplished in ten days, while the journey by Odessa takes at least eleven. Another road is by rail to Zaritzin, on the Volga, then down the Volga to Astrakhan by river steamer, and then on to Baku by Caspian Sea steamer. I have visited the petroleum districts of Baku nine times during the last twenty years, and have travelled not only by all these three routes, but by several others which are not so short.



On my first visit to Baku the Russian steamers on the Caspian burnt coal, which was most expensive, and this was eked out by using a composite fuel, which was composed of coal dust mixed with petroleum refuse and shaped in a mould. The quantity of this fuel that was available was small, as the amount of coal dust procurable was limited. Several efforts were made to burn either crude petroleum or else *astatki*, which is the refuse left after the more volatile oils have been distilled off from crude petroleum. The first efforts in this direction were not successful, but the difficulties were finally overcome, and for the last twelve years *astatki* has been burnt in most of the steamers running on the Caspian Sea or the Volga river. I have no exact return of the number of vessels in which *astatki* is used on the Volga and Caspian Sea, but the number, including small tugs and steam launches, cannot, I believe, be put down at less than 200. All factories and refineries at Baku, which are very numerous, being nearly 100 in number, burn *astatki* as fuel for the heating of their steam boilers. The small steam-engines working the 157 wells which at present produce oil in the neighbourhood of Baku, are also all heated either with crude oil or *astatki*. Besides this, the very numerous factories at Zaritzin and other places on the Volga use this fuel, and also some factories at Moscow, and at least one at St Petersburg.

On the Trans-Caucasian Railway the locomotives use *astatki*, as do also the locomotives on the Zaritzin-Grazi line, having its terminus on the Volga. The locomotives of the Trans-Caspian railroad from Michaeloff, on the Caspian, to Merv, also burn nothing else, a million poods, at 36 lbs each pood, having been supplied last year for the use of this railroad. The cleanliness and safety of petroleum refuse as fuel has been abundantly demonstrated, and I have only heard of one accident, where a fireman was much burnt in trying to cleanse the pulveriser of a steam-engine which had been choked while the pulveriser was in actual use, and this was due to carelessness on the fireman's part.

Great ignorance seems to prevail in England in regard to the petroleum refuse burnt in Russia under the name of *astatki*, and extraordinary ideas as to its inflammability seem to prevail. Of course crude petroleum as taken from the well is a highly inflammable substance, and would be dangerous to burn on board ship. I will therefore proceed to describe exactly what is known in Russia as *astatki*. When the crude oil is taken from the wells at Balakhana, situated some 8 miles from the port of Baku, on the Caspian Sea, it is first pumped into shallow basins, where it stands for a short time to deposit the sand, with which it is largely mixed. It should not be allowed to stand long, as the heat of the sun causes the evaporation of its more volatile particles, but it should be pumped into closed reservoirs, and is then delivered by the pipe lines (of which there are twelve belonging to different companies) to the refineries situated on the Bay of Baku. This crude oil is then run into great iron boilers containing from 200 to 3,000 poods each, and is distilled either by fire alone, or else, which is the preferable method, superheated steam is introduced into the boiler, while the outside of the boiler is at the same time heated by the direct action of a petroleum fire. At first the volatile oils, known under the names of benzene and gasolene, are taken off. These, especially benzene, are highly dangerous and inflammable substances. At Baku most of the benzene is got rid of by running it into the sea, though a small quantity, enclosed in iron casks, is forwarded to Russia by the Volga for detergent purposes. The gasolene is not exported, but is used in the Baku district itself as fuel, especially in iron works. After the benzene and gasolene have been

distilled off, kerosene, a much less inflammable oil, is taken off by distillation, and also solar oil, which is still less inflammable. The Baku practice is to consider all oil between 0.780 and 0.860 specific gravity (water being taken as 1) as kerosene. This is a much higher specific gravity than American oil. The distilled oil having a specific gravity between 0.860 and 0.880 is known at Baku as solar oil. All refuse having a higher specific gravity than 0.880 is run off into the *astatki* or refuse tank. This is the substance adapted for burning in locomotives and in the furnaces of marine boilers, and should alone be used. Some Russian *astatki* has a specific gravity of 0.910, and occasionally even higher.

It will be observed how much of the inflammable portion of the original crude petroleum has been taken off, and thus *astatki* can be carried with perfect safety in the hottest climate. The burning point of ordinary Baku *astatki* is about 422° F.

A very reprehensible practice obtains with the more unscrupulous dealers. If they have a flowing well and the quantity of petroleum thrown up by it has been more than they could either refine or sell, and the crude oil has remained some time exposed to the air in the lakes or ponds which surround the wells, and has from long exposure become unfit for refining, they run this crude oil, which is known as lake oil, into their *astatki* tank. As crude oil contains a large proportion of volatile oils, this practice is most objectionable. It is, however, easily discovered by a very simple test, and the taking on board a steamer of *astatki* thus adulterated can be guarded against.

Besides this adulteration by the mixture of crude petroleum with the legitimate *astatki*, another adulteration not so objectionable takes place by the admixture of a substance known in Russia as *gudron*. *Gudron* is the residue when *astatki*, which has already given up its more volatile oils, is again mixed with superheated steam and redistilled and made to yield three descriptions of lubricating oils of different specific gravities. The lightest is generally known as spindle oil, then machine oil, and, thirdly, cylinder oil. This last has a specific gravity as high as 0.925. This second residue or *gudron*, having lost so much of its oily constituents, is much less inflammable than ordinary *astatki*, and it is a common practice at Baku to mix 10 to 15 per cent of *gudron* with the *astatki* sold for burning purposes. There is not the same objection to *astatki* adulterated with *gudron* as to the *astatki* adulterated with crude oil. *Gudron* cannot be burnt by itself, so this mixture is slightly less inflammable than the ordinary refuse, but there is an objection to its use as *gudron* is very thick and likely to be full of lumps, it is thus apt to clog the pulverizer or burner through which it is driven.

I am aware of the various trials and experiments that have been carried out at Woolwich and at other places in England in the burning of different hydrocarbons as fuel for steam-engines, and also for the heating of iron furnaces, but I wish here strictly to confine myself to what has been accomplished in Russia, because it has been more widely used there than elsewhere with most excellent results. In 1870 a steamer called the *Alexi* was fitted with an apparatus for burning *astatki*, and was most successful. Mr. Lentz, a very celebrated engineer, who has at present large works at Baku, over which he kindly conducted me, had about the same period invented an improved burner, or pulverizer as it is always called. Mr. Lentz took out a patent for his improved burner, and this, or a modification of it, is now almost universally adopted in steam-engines and locomotives in Russia. I now produce to you the most simple form of burner which is used at Baku. Through a straight pipe ending in a slightly flattened orifice,

a jet of steam is driven: astatki is allowed to flow from a small tank through a curved pipe and to meet the steam which pulverizes it or divides into fine spray. This fine spray of mixed steam and astatki is driven by the force of the steam jet into the furnace in which a fire of wood or cotton waste has already been kindled. This fire is continually fed by a spray of mixed steam and astatki. It will be observed that it is requisite before starting a steam-engine by this method to get up steam with either a wood or coal fire to supply the steam necessary for using the pulverizer. Of course this is an objection, but it is one that is easily overcome. At Querelle on the Trans-Caucasian Railroad, where there is a large engine-shed over which I was kindly taken by the engineer in charge, the locomotives which have brought the trains over the sharp gradients higher up the line are changed and fresh engines supplied. As many engines are always ready in waiting, the difficulty of starting the fire is surmounted by one engine always keeping up steam ready to supply the quantity necessary for utilizing the astatki burners, but it would be easy to supply the necessary steam from a small stationary boiler. When borrowed steam is used for starting a locomotive a special arrangement for the transmission of the steam from the locomotive supplying it in the first instance to the injector of the supplied engine has to be added, but this is attained by a very simple apparatus which I need not here describe. I was informed that a pressure of 120 lbs of steam can be obtained from cold water in about fifty minutes from the first application of steam to the pulverizer, and in about half that time when it was only necessary to raise steam in boilers already containing hot water.

In marine boilers on the Caspian Sea steam is originally got up by lighting a wood fire which is dispensed with as soon as the necessary amount of steam for utilising the pulverizer has been obtained. Thus it is only at the commencement of a voyage, when steam has to be got up, that any fuel except astatki requires to be used.

The advantages claimed by the Russians in using astatki beyond that obtained by the use of the best coal or even of other hydro-carbons than astatki are as follows:—That the caloric power of astatki is greater than that of any other fuel; that its manipulation is very simple, and that it can be used with complete safety. Thus it is a most convenient and, for them, inexpensive fuel. The price at which it can be delivered, either in tank wagons at Baku railway station or on board vessels in the bay at Baku, does not exceed two shillings and sixpence per ton, and has sometimes been even less than that sum.

Mr Urquhart of the Grazi-Zaritzin Railroad, on whose line astatki has been used for several years with the most complete success, and who is a great authority, states as follows:—

'Comparing naphtha refuse with coal, the former has a theoretical evaporative power of 16.2 lbs of water per lb. of fuel, and the latter of 12 lbs at an effective pressure of 8 atmos., or 120 lbs to the square inch; hence petroleum has weight for weight 33 per cent. higher evaporative value than anthracite. Now in locomotive practice a mean evaporation of from 7 to 7½ lbs. of water per lb. of anthracite is about what is generally obtained, thus giving in the case of coal about 60 per cent. of efficiency, while 40 per cent of the heating power is unavoidably lost. But with petroleum an evaporation of 12.25 lbs.

is practically obtained giving  $\frac{12.25}{16.2} = 75$  per cent. efficiency. Thus, in the first place, petroleum is theoretically 33 per cent. superior to anthracite in evaporative power; and, secondly, its usual effect is 15 per cent. greater, being 75 per cent. instead of 60 per cent.; while,

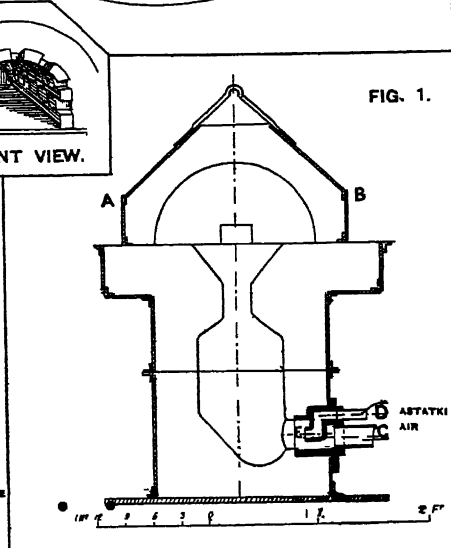
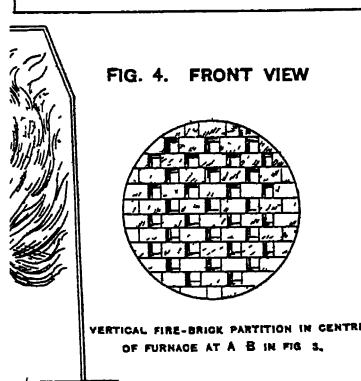
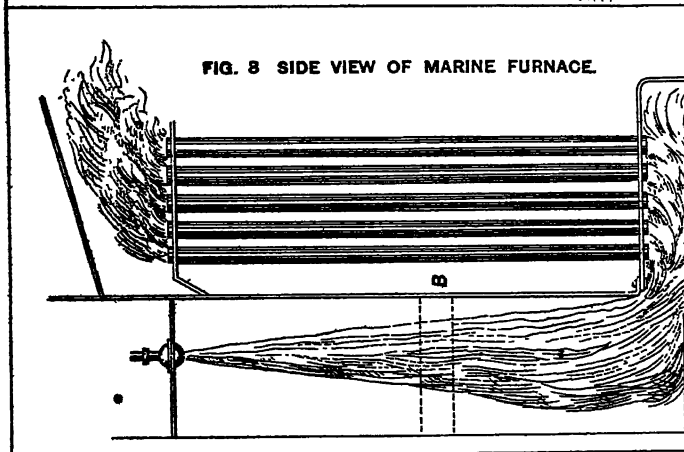
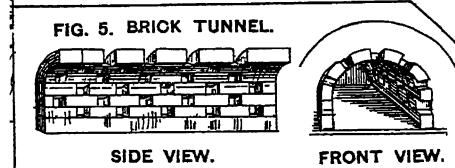
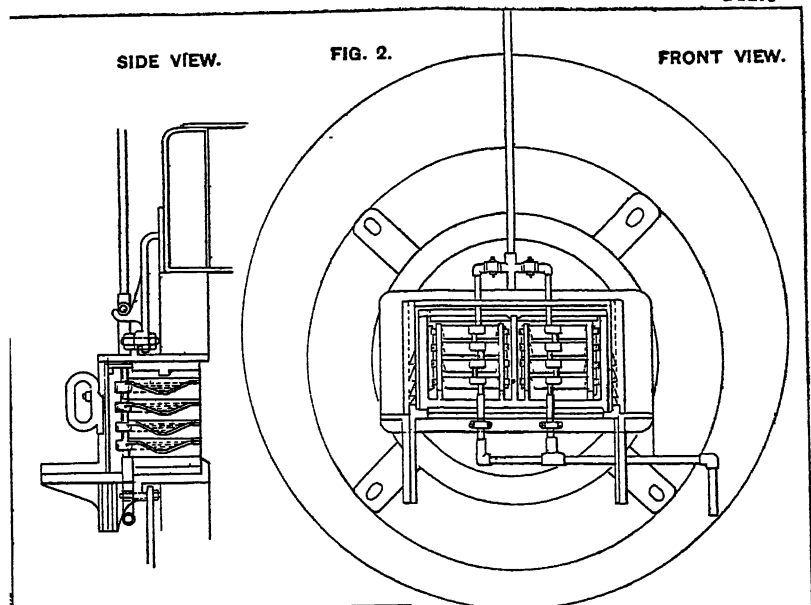
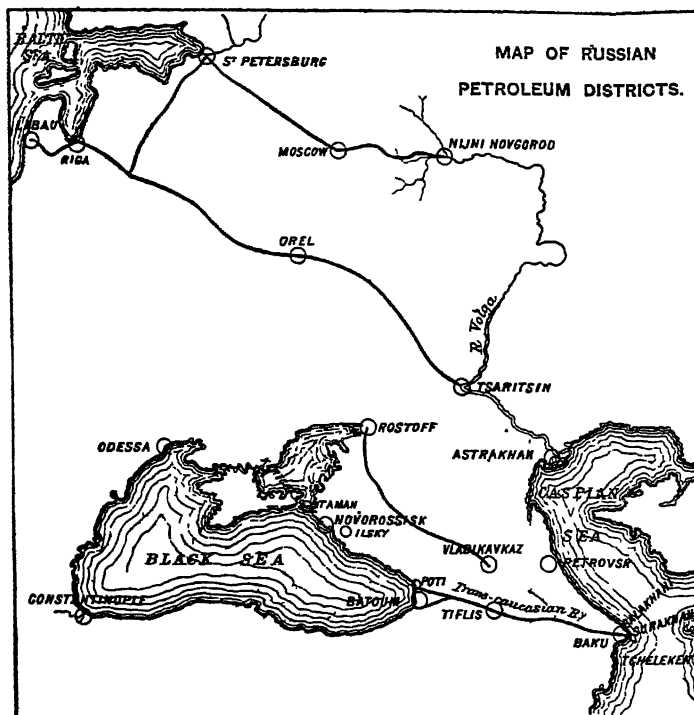
thirdly, weight for weight, the practical evaporative value of petroleum must be reckoned as at least from  $\frac{12\ 25 - 7\ 50}{7\ 50} = 63$  per cent to  $\frac{12\ 25 - 7\ 00}{7\ 00} = 75$  per cent. higher than anthracite \*

We may thus consider that 1 ton of astatki is equal in practical efficiency for steam generating purposes to about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  tons of the best anthracite coal when steam is used for mixing with it in the pulverizer, but it is quite allowed by both Mr Lentz, the celebrated Russian engineer, and by Mr Nobel, another great authority on this subject, that though it is cheaper to use steam as the pulverizer, better results are obtained by a jet of air instead of a jet of steam—an apparatus in the nature of a Roots' blower being used for the jet instead of steam. At Mr Lentz's ironworks at Baku I saw such an apparatus in practical operation for heating large forgings. I here produce a drawing of the furnace in question (Fig 1 in diagram) A blower driven at a very high rate of speed—3,500 revolutions per minute—drives a current of air into the bottom of the furnace through the opening at C, where it meets a tube, D, E, containing either astatki or else some of the most volatile oils extracted from petroleum. At Baku both gasoline and solar oil being waste products which must be got rid of, are largely used in the ironworks,\* but it would be of too inflammable a nature for use either in locomotives or marine engines, a similar result is, however, obtained with astatki The jet of mixed air and gasoline introduced rises to the top of the furnace where it is lighted. This causes a most intense fire, and forgings of considerable size are soon heated to any degree that may be required. A, B is merely a loose iron cover which is placed over the furnace to retain the heat, and is removable at pleasure

Mr Nobel, who is the largest refiner of petroleum at Baku, has also an iron foundry at that place. I saw a cylinder for condensing water weighing considerably over a ton that had recently been cast, the fuel employed was astatki. I was present when several castings were made, and saw about half a ton of pig iron reduced to a liquid state in about an hour. Mr Nobel employs an apparatus in this furnace in which no steam is used, and a strong natural draught of air is utilised in burning the petroleum refuse The apparatus consists of a series of shallow troughs placed one above the other at the mouth of the furnace, the burning astatki being made to run through a small connecting pipe from the highest to the lowest series of troughs I here produce before you some of these troughs, and a drawing of an improved apparatus of this sort (see Fig. 2 in diagrams; side and front view is given). With this apparatus the practical result obtained is much better than when steam is used as an injector;  $14\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of water were actually vaporized by 1 lb. of fuel, and it is hoped that even somewhat better results may be obtained; so that we may consider that a ton of astatki used with this trough burner is in practical efficiency equal to nearly two tons of coal

I will now proceed to consider the question of the quantity of petroleum fuel available in South-Eastern Russia for use in locomotives and marine engines. At Baku there are at this moment 157 wells yielding oil. Of these some twelve are springing wells, which, when in action, throw a column of petroleum into the air to various heights, sometimes only to a few feet above the level of the ground, and others on some occasions throwing a vast column of petroleum into the air to a height of nearly 200 feet. A well at Bibiabad, near Baku, which

\* Gasoline was the fuel used when I saw this furnace in use.



I visited, belonging to a Tartar whose name has been Russianised into Tagieff, when it was first bored was for a considerable time a springing well. It threw up at the rate of 250,000 poods of 36 lbs. each a day for nine days. A reservoir had been constructed capable of containing 500,000 poods, but after this was filled, the remainder flowed into the sea, and thus more than a million of poods were wasted. At the end of nine days it stopped flowing for a time, but for many weeks it continued to be a flowing well at intervals. At present it is no longer a flowing well, but a pumping well, and produces 10,000 poods a day. The level of the oil in this well was 82 sagines or Russian fathoms of 7 feet each, when the pumping was commenced last year; and though pumping has been continued for a year at the rate of 10,000 poods a day, the level of the oil has not fallen, and still stands at 82 sagines.

At Baku ordinary pumps are not used, as the oil is so mixed with sand that the valves of the pump would be very soon destroyed. Instead of this, a valved tube somewhat similar to a sand pump is lowered into the well and drawn up when full by a long rope, worked by a small steam-engine. This tube varies in size and brings up from 15 to 20 poods at each lift. The time required for each operation varies according to the depth of the well, but the one I am especially referring to, used in a well 82 fathoms in depth, was raised and emptied by the steam-engine six times in every five minutes. Some of the flowing wells at Baku have produced enormous quantities of oil, equalling anything I have heard of as produced by a single well in America. The well at present considered to yield the largest quantity of oil at Baku belongs to an Armenian named Awakoff. It is said to have flowed at first at the rate of 300,000 poods a day, but Mr Nobel has one or two wells which almost, if they do not quite equal it; both his No 18 and No 23 having been flowing wells of the very first class. In the neighbourhood of Baku, viz, at Bibiabad, Balakhana, Surukhana, and Binagudi, some 344 wells had been bored up to September, 1885, the latest date to which I have a return. A few more have since been bored. On that date 142 of these wells were giving oil, and 19 new wells were in progress. I believe the number now producing oil is about 157. From these wells last year 103 millions of poods of crude oil were extracted, which is more than 1,690,000 tons, and last year the output was as much restricted as possible in consequence of the very low price ruling for crude oil and its products. The wells are closed with a sliding valve to prevent their flowing at inopportune times, but they very often burst through all restraints. While I was in Baku in April and May last, on several days a well belonging to Messrs Palaschkowsky, much against the will of its owners, threw up 100,000 poods a day. It is impossible to sell or refine the very large quantities produced by these springing wells. I only mention these facts to show that an almost unlimited supply of petroleum is available at Baku, and if a brisk demand arose, the supply could be greatly increased beyond what was obtained last year.

It must be remembered that besides the supply available from Baku, there are large deposits of petroleum near Novo Rassisk and Taman, on the Black Sea coast, while some petroleum is found near Kertch, in the Crimea. The quantity of refuse fit for burning produced at Baku is very much more considerable in proportion to the crude oil there found than it is in America. In America something like 70 per cent of kerosene is obtained from the crude oil, while at Baku not more than 30 per cent of kerosene is obtained, leaving a residue of 70 per cent of astatki fit for fuel. Also in America the residue is used for other purposes than fuel, viz, for the production of anthracene,

naphthalene, and benzol, so that the quantity of residuum available for burning is not comparatively nearly so great as at Baku. Having shown that the quantity of crude oil that would be available at Baku and at Novo Rassisk is likely to exceed any probable demand for many years, I will now proceed to consider the question of cost relatively to coal. I am prepared to allow that Russian astatki cannot be used as fuel in England at a price which would enable it to compete with coal, if the question of cost alone was considered and all other advantages placed out of sight, but even if the question of price is alone considered, I think astatki could be delivered in Egypt, at Malta, at Cyprus, and especially in the Red Sea, at prices very little above that of coal, allowing that 1 ton of astatki is equal to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tons of coal in steam generating power. The price of astatki at Baku is at present about 2s 4d to 2s 6d a ton, but as it has to be carried in tank cars to Batoum, on the Black Sea, a distance of over 500 miles, the price delivered on board ship at Batoum at the present time is about 25s. a ton, while at Novo Rassisk it can be procured at about 22s. The quantity, however, procurable at Novo Rassisk, though considerable, would soon be exhausted if a large demand arose.

If a pipe line were constructed from Baku to Batoum (a project which is at present under the consideration of the Russian Minister for Crown Domains), the cost of transport would be considerably reduced, and it could then probably be delivered on board ship at Batoum at about 17s. per ton. If conveyed in tank steamers, the cost of transit to Egypt or Malta would not be great, and it could then compete at those places very successfully with coal. Among the advantages which astatki has over coal may be mentioned that the stowage space required is rather less than that required for coal, and that it can be stowed in spaces that would not be available as coal bunkers, viz., in the tanks usually filled with water-ballast. Besides these there is the great advantage of cleanliness; there is no ash or refuse of any sort to get rid of, and it requires no stoking or attention. In fact Russian steamers running from port to port on the Caspian Sea, after having started their fires, these practically require no attention till the end of the voyage, and thus the services of stokers are almost dispensed with. On the Caspian Sea steamers only such a number of men are employed as are necessary to keep the machinery clean. An engineer is of course necessary to watch the steam, &c., but the firing really requires no attention. A properly arranged astatki fire is also almost, if not quite, smokeless. Plenty of smoke can be seen issuing from the chimneys of the older refineries at Baku, but this is sheer carelessness and waste. In the White Town, near Baku, where the newer refineries are situated, and especially at the factory of Novo Rassisk, where a good system of burning is adopted, there is hardly any smoke. The appearance of smoke is a sign that a waste of fuel is taking place, and is at once obviated by a slight adjustment of the pulverizer, or a small change in the draught. I need not point out how great an advantage it would be in action to have no smoke from the furnaces, and though I am aware that when Welsh coal is used the quantity of smoke is considerably reduced, still the smoke produced, even by the best Welsh coal, is very much greater than in a properly arranged astatki furnace.

At Baku differently arranged furnaces are used in the marine engines, but the most usual and the most simple is the following. When it is proposed to convert a coal-burning furnace into an astatki-burning furnace the fire-bars are taken out, as they are no longer required, and a vertical fire-brick partition is built about the centre of the furnace (*vide* Fig. 4)• This fire-brick partition has

many openings in it, each opening being the size of one brick, the openings are left for the passage of the flame through the partition. This brick division retains the heat, and cannot well be dispensed with. A low brick wall is also sometimes placed at the end of the furnace. An alteration has also to be made in the door of the furnace for the admission of the pulverizer, and for the regulation of the draught, a stronger draught being required in burning astatki than in burning coal. A diagram is here shown of the furnace of a Baku marine engine (Fig. 3). A small tank containing petroleum has to be placed in such a position that the astatki shall be readily supplied to the burner. This tank is filled from the main petroleum tanks. All the alterations for the conversion of a coal-burning furnace into an astatki-burning one can be made in a very few days, and the re-conversion of an astatki-burning furnace into one burning coal is very much simpler. It is only necessary to take the brickwork out of the furnace, replace the fire-bars, and put in a new door; in fact the alterations for this re-conversion could be carried out in one day if necessary. A great many of the furnaces of the steamers on the Caspian Sea and on the Volga were originally constructed to burn coal, and have been converted to their present use, but where a furnace is specially constructed to burn astatki, it has been found that better results are obtained if the boiler tubes are made longer and of less diameter than in a boiler intended for use with coal, and the same remark holds good for locomotives in which astatki is used.

In furnaces of land boilers the space being larger, it is usual to reduce it by building a fire-brick tunnel with many openings in the interior of the furnace. At Novo Rassisk I was present when a land boiler used at some Portland cement works, in grinding the cement, was converted from a coal-burning furnace to an astatki-burning one. The boilers were ordinary cylindrical boilers below, with tubular boilers above, and had been constructed by Borsig, of Berlin. Great difficulty had been found when coal was used, unless it was of the very best quality, in obtaining power enough to drive the grinding mill, but with astatki no such difficulty occurred. I here show a diagram of a section of the brick tunnel in this furnace, and also a side view of it (*vide* Fig. 5). I know of one marine engine, which has this brick tunnel in its furnace.

Besides the steamers on the Caspian a few on the Black Sea now burn petroleum. Mr Tweedie, an English merchant of Odessa, has had some of his vessels running on the Black Sea converted so as to burn astatki, and I believe proposes to convert the whole of his fleet in a short time. In England two or three vessels are building intended to burn petroleum, one at Messrs. Armstrong's works, on the Tyne, and one or two more elsewhere. These will not only burn petroleum, but are tank steamers especially constructed for the carriage of petroleum and its various products. On the Caspian Sea there are a number of tank steamers, many of them belonging to Messrs. Nobel, but also some to other companies, which are constructed for carrying petroleum, but they are not intended for long sea voyages. A tank steamer called the 'Svet,' has been built at Mothala, in Sweden, specially for the carriage of petroleum products on long sea voyages. Two more are being built at the same place for the Russian Black Sea Company. In the Caspian tank steamers the skin of the ship itself forms the outside of the tanks, but in the 'Svet' the tanks are quite separate from the sides of the vessel. I have heard within the last few days that there is some probability of the 'Svet,' which is now at Gibraltar, bringing a cargo to London, and an opportunity may thus occur of examining her. A vessel constructed to burn



petroleum refuse was, I know, launched in England in March or April last

Another great advantage that astatki has over coal is the facility of taking in a cargo. All of us must remember the disagreeables of coaling and the utter discomfort caused by it. Everything in the vessel is covered with a grimy coat of coal-dust, but with the cleanly astatki none of these horrors have to be endured. A connection is made through a pipe from the shore to the steamer requiring a cargo of astatki, and it is pumped into the tanks on board at the rate of 100 tons an hour by a steam pump. At Baku 800 tons of petroleum are placed on board a steamer in eight hours. If a vessel required a very large cargo of astatki, by using several pipes she might fill several tanks at the same time, thus reducing the time necessary for taking on board her cargo of fuel.

I have heard two objections made in England to the use of petroleum as fuel. first, that it is highly inflammable and dangerous in use. I have shown that this objection is groundless in the case of astatki, which is by no means so, though crude petroleum is highly inflammable, but no one would propose to burn crude petroleum in marine furnaces. The flashing point of astatki is from  $316^{\circ}$  to  $322^{\circ}$ , and the burning point is about  $417^{\circ}$  to  $422^{\circ}$ . A good deal of confusion is caused by people not understanding the difference between the flashing point and burning point of mineral oils. The flashing point is when such a temperature is reached that the oil gives off gas but does not itself burn. I produce before you a machine that is used for testing kerosene oil, and I will show the difference between the flashing point and the burning point, and you will see that even when the kerosene attains the flashing point and a light is applied, it will not burn, a far higher temperature is required for that. I should have liked to have carried out this experiment in your presence with astatki, of which I here produce a sample, but the flashing point and especially the burning point of astatki is so high that I should have considerable difficulty in a place like this in obtaining the necessary heat to raise it to its burning point. I, therefore, show the experiment with kerosene which has a low flashing and burning point.

The other objection made to its use is that it could not be procured in sufficient quantities at a reasonable price. I have endeavoured to show that millions of tons of it could be procured even now at a price by no means placing its use beyond the reach of competition with coal in the Mediterranean and eastern seas. When the pipe line from Baku to Batoum is laid down the price will be so much lowered that it will easily compete with coal in all countries where coal is not a home product, and the advantages attending its use which I will here recapitulate are so great that except in the question of price coal could not enter into competition with it at all. Firstly.—Astatki requires rather less room than coal for its stowage. Secondly.—It can be stowed on board vessels in spaces that could not possibly be used for coal; for instance, between the inner and outer bottom of a ship. Thirdly.—It is cleanly in use, there being no cinders or ashes. Fourthly.—It almost does away with the necessity of a fire crew beyond the number necessary for cleaning the machinery and superintending the steam. Anyone who has watched stokers at work in the hold of a coal-burning ship in the hot weather in the Red Sea would appreciate the advantages of doing away with all stoking. Fifthly.—The great facility of loading is an enormous advantage, and the absence of smoke is by no means its least good quality.

It may be objected that we could not trust to Russia for a supply.

of petroleum for our ships in case of war, but for the present petroleum refuse could be procured from Russia, and it is a product which is found in so many countries that if there was a demand the supply could be obtained from many other lands. Besides the supply procurable from America, Upper Burmah, which happily is ours, can give us large quantities. It has been found in India, and some is actually being used experimentally on the railways in that country, while its discovery on the western coast of the Red Sea, it is believed in considerable quantities, is a point of great importance. Petroleum can also be obtained from Australia. I think that petroleum will eventually be discovered in the Persian Gulf and on the Beloochistan coast, as mud volcanoes are numerous in that part of the world. In the Caucasus mud volcanoes are looked upon as almost a sure indication of petroleum. I do not here refer to the hydrocarbons produced in England, as I fear the price might be too high if a large demand arose.

I wish most earnestly to bring to the notice of our naval authorities the advantages a Russian war vessel burning petroleum would have over our vessels burning coal. In case of war a fast Russian war vessel having on board, say, 1,500 tons of petroleum, could keep at sea for a very long period, and do our shipping interests incalculable mischief. She would probably be captured when her supply of petroleum fuel was exhausted, but it would be well worth Russia's while to lose a ship after all the mischief she could accomplish during the time her supply of fuel was available. Vessels burning coal would have a very bad chance of capturing her as long as her fuel lasted, as they would require to replenish their supply long before she would require to do so, and it is not even quite certain that she would be helpless when her supply of *astatki* came to an end, for it would be quite possible if she could procure a supply of coal to alter her furnaces in a day or two so as to burn that fuel.

The very great advantage that would be obtained by torpedo-boats burning *astatki* over torpedo-boats burning coal I need hardly point out. In these small vessels a hydrocarbon like *astatki*, whose steam-generating power is nearly double that of coal, would give the boats using it an immense superiority, to say nothing of the advantage gained by their power of approaching the enemy at night unseen in consequence of the almost entire absence of smoke.

It should be our object to have a supply of *astatki* stored for the use of our vessels at different points in the Red and Mediterranean Seas and Indian Ocean. If we had large reservoirs containing *astatki* in Cyprus, at Malta, Gibraltar, Aden, Ceylon, Singapore, and Hong Kong, our vessels, both of the mercantile marine and Royal Navy, which need that fuel would have an immense advantage over the ships of any nation burning coal.

*(Here followed discussion on Paper).*

## APPENDIX III

### CENTRAL ASIAN RAILWAY EXTENSION

By Col. C. E. STEWART, C.B., C.M.G., C.I.E.,

*On the desirability of making a connection between the Russian Central-Asian Railway, now almost completed to the Afghan Frontier, and the Indian Railway System, so as to have through communication with India by the most direct line, the distance intervening between the Russian and Indian Systems, when completed, being under 600 miles Read at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, E.C., December 15th, 1886.*

[Reprinted by permission from the *Chamber of Commerce Journal*]

BEFORE entering on the subject of my lecture, I wish shortly to trace the various trade routes to the East, which have been in use in ancient or modern times. I will first describe the one used in the earliest ages. In very early times the trade between India and Europe was conducted by the Greeks. The route followed was by the Black Sea to the mouth of the River Phasis in Colchis, now known as the Rion river in the trans-Caucasus province of Russia. At the mouth of this river the town of Poti is now situated. The traders, on arrival at the mouth of the Rion, embarked their goods in light boats and carried them up that river to the point where it is joined by the Kvirilla river; they then proceeded up that river to a little above the present Kvirilla station of the trans-Caucasus railroad. Here the goods were disembarked and carried across the Suram pass, which the trans-Caucasus Railway crosses with so much difficulty. This difficulty, will, however, soon be overcome by the tunnel, the making of which has been sanctioned by the Russian Government, at an expenditure of £1,050,000. The works for the construction of this tunnel have, I believe, been commenced.

In ancient times the goods, after being carried over the Suram pass, were re-embarked in light boats on the Kur (ancient Cyrus) river, and were carried down that river to the point where it falls into the Caspian Sea, a little south of the town of Baku, now so celebrated for its petroleum oil wells. The goods were thence transported across the Caspian Sea to the mouth of the Oxus river, which then fell into the Caspian, and from thence up the Oxus to near the city of Balkh, from whence they were sent to India or distributed over Central Asia. This route is mentioned by Strabo, Pliny and other ancient writers, and the voyage to the Phasis in Colchis is the theme of the celebrated voyage of the Argonauts in search of the golden fleece.

This route was abandoned partly from political and partly probably from physical reasons. The attacks of the barbarous tribes of Central Asia, first on the Greco-Bactrian kingdoms situated near the Oxus and

later on the Parthian kingdom of the Arsacidæ must have rendered this road very insecure, and finally the change in the course of the river Oxus, which ceased to flow into the Caspian and discharged its waters into the Aral Sea, must have seriously interfered with its use, or rendered it impossible. A portion of this route was, however, in the middle ages utilized by Genoese merchants for their trade with Gilan, the northern province of Persia, from whence the silk known in the middle ages as Ghellé was brought. A curious fact connected with this traffic is that the boats in which the goods were carried up the Rion river, were themselves, it is said, sometimes carried across from the Kwirilla stream to the Kur river. I cannot understand how this can have been done, as the transport of the very lightest boat over a rough mountain road for a distance of something like forty miles must have been extremely difficult. The fact of the transport of boats by the Genoese from the Black to the Caspian Sea is mentioned by Marco Polo, and there is an account of some Genoese buccaneers having carried across a large boat, and of their piratical exploits on the latter sea. Difficult as may seem the transport of a boat from the Black to the Caspian Sea, a distance of some 500 miles, the point where it could most easily be accomplished is by the line above indicated, where rivers navigable by boats are separated from one another by a distance of only about 40 miles. The buccaneers may perhaps have carried their boat from the river Don to the Volga river, and then sailed down that river to the Caspian Sea, but the distance of land transport would have been greater. I believe canoes and goods are in Canada carried across considerable distances from one river and launched on another, and thus seems to have been a similar case.

A second trade route, much used in early times for the conveyance of goods from India and the East generally, was up the Persian Gulf to the mouth of the combined streams of the Euphrates and Tigris, now known as the Shatt El Arab, and then through Babylonia and Syria to the Mediterranean Sea. The third great trade route of ancient times from Europe to the East was through Egypt and the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean, and this route was most extensively used up to the time of the re-discovery of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco di Gama. After this discovery, almost all the trade of Europe was carried by the Cape, and the older routes, so far as trade with Europe was concerned, were abandoned. The possibility of sailing round Africa was known to the ancients, Africa having been circumnavigated by a body of Phœnician sailors sent out by Pharaoh Neco, and, though this circumnavigation of Africa has been doubted, there seems no reason for doubting the account of this event given by Herodotus.

It is very curious how trade seems to be returning to the ancient and more direct routes long since abandoned. First, the opening of the Suez Canal almost destroyed the trade previously carried on by the Cape of Good Hope, and brought it back to Egypt and the Red Sea.

It was at one time proposed to construct a railway from some point on the Syrian coast, near Alexandretta or Beyrout by the Euphrates valley to the Persian Gulf. This would have restored the second of the old trade routes, but though twenty years ago this route would have had a great deal to be said in its favour, and I personally became so far interested in it that I, in 1869, travelled from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf by it, a still better and much shorter route to India and the East is now not only possible but is almost completed and ready to our hand, and only requires a few hundred miles of railway to be constructed by us to connect our Indian system of railways with the Russian trans-Caspian line.

If on a globe a string is stretched between London and Quettah, the shortest line between those two points will be the result, and the distance so obtained is 3,165 geographical miles, or 3,640 statute miles. This line would very nearly follow the line of railway which has already been constructed through Calais, Brussels, Cologne, Berlin, Warsaw, Kief, Kharkof, Rostov to Vladikafkas, at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains. From Vladikafkas a line of railway has been sanctioned by the Russian Government, and is about to be constructed to Petrofsk, on the western coast of the Caspian Sea. So that in a very short time we shall have free communication between Calais and the Caspian Sea without a break. I have already travelled many times from Calais to the Caspian Sea by railroad, but as yet I have always had one break and had to cross the Caucasus Mountains by a diligence, between Vladikafkas and Tiflis, in Georgia, thus passing at that point from the Russian-European system of railroads to the trans-Caucasus line, which forms part of Russia's Asiatic system of railroads. When the line about to be constructed from Vladikafkas to the Caspian is completed, travellers would keep to the north of the Caucasus, and would be able to reach the Caspian Sea without leaving Europe. The shortest line, as shewn by the string stretched on a globe, would then cross the Caspian Sea from Petrofsk to the new port of Usunada, which the Russians are constructing on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea near Michaeloff. Usunada is the terminus of their Central-Asian railroad. This railroad passes through Kizil Arvat, Askabad, and Merv, and is being continued to Samarkand. It is already finished beyond Merv, to the Oxus River, but our interest in it does not extend beyond Merv, as here this railway ceases to follow the direct road to India. A branch line is, however, I understand, to be made from Merv to the Afghan frontier, near Maruchak. This line towards Maruchak, when completed, will be, speaking roughly, within a hundred miles of Herat.

The frontier post of Chaman, which is the most advanced post held by the British on the Indian frontier, is about 440 miles from Herat; thus, to connect the Indian railways with the Russian Central Asian line, about 560 miles of railway would have to be constructed—440 miles from the Indian frontier to Herat, and about 120 miles from Herat to the Russian frontier. In comparison with what has already been accomplished by Russia and England in the way of railway making in Asia, this seems a mere trifle, and the physical difficulties of the road would not be found on this portion of the route. The greatest difficulty to be overcome consisted in low hills of shifting sand, found on the portion of the line between the Caspian Sea and Kizil Arvat, and also in some places between Askabad and Merv, but those have been overcome by the Russian engineers, and trains have long been running over this portion of the line without serious difficulty. Only the comparatively easy portion of the road would fall to England's share, and I cannot think that 560 miles of railroad through a comparatively well-known country, of which good surveys have been made, can be considered a difficulty before which English engineers would succumb. A few years ago it was believed that deserts and high ranges of mountains intervened between the Asiatic possessions of Russia and our Indian frontier; but Mr Lessar, the Russian engineer, by his explorations and the surveyors of the Indian Government under Major Holdich, R.E., who accompanied the Afghan Boundary Commission, have by their labours dispelled these ideas. The range of mountains to the north of the Herat Valley was supposed to be a great obstacle to the making of a railroad, but it has been proved that in the western part near the Persian frontier they are not

of any great elevation and that there are passes over which a railway could, without any serious difficulty, be constructed.

We may here first consider the line from Maruchak to the Herat Valley. No obstacle of any importance would be encountered until the range of mountains generally called in Europe Paropamisus was reached. This mountain range could be crossed either by the Khombau Pass, or the Robat Surk Pass. Mr Lessar, the Russian who took the height of the Khombau Pass, states it to be 3,100 feet above the sea level, and our engineers found it to be 3,470 feet; the height above the plain is much less than this, as the plain itself is at rather a high level, and thus probably the railway would only have to rise something like 1,700 feet above the plain to cross the Pass, which, of course, is nothing at all serious for a railroad, and better results might be obtained by choosing one of the other Passes in preference to the Khombau. I would not propose that the railway should go through Herat itself, but, keeping more to the westward, should cross the Herat Valley near Ghurian, and from thence be constructed *viâ* Girishk to Kandahar, and from Kandahar to Ohaman, the frontier post of our Indian possessions, or to such other point on the Indian frontier to which the Quettah Pishin railroad may be completed. Between Herat and Kandahar, though there are some hills to be crossed, they are not of any great height.

Having proved that the physical difficulties to be encountered in making a railway through this part of Afghanistan are inconsiderable, I will proceed to consider the question from another point of view. I may be told that the Afghans would oppose the making of such a line of railroad, and that all sorts of difficulties would arise. I do not at all think so, and believe that for a fair money payment, not only the Ameer of Afghanistan himself, but his people also, would acquiesce in the construction of the line, and would protect it from harm when made. Some five-and-twenty years ago, when it was proposed to construct a telegraph line through Persia and Russia to England, so as to connect India and London by telegraph, we were told that the line would be of no use, that a telegraph worked through Persia and Russia was not worth the cost of making, &c., &c. I suppose it will be granted that a telegraph line is much more easily destroyed than a railway, but it is a fact that the line of telegraph through Russia and Persia to India has for the last twenty years worked well, and has been most useful, especially during Arabi Pasha's revolt in Egypt, when the other line of telegraph to India by Egypt was for a considerable period interrupted, and our whole telegraphic communication with India was carried through Russia and Persia.

At first the Persians disliked the line, and it was occasionally cut, and in its early days the Persian Government was either unwilling or unable to punish the offenders, but it very soon came to be understood that it was to their interest to prevent the line being damaged. Although this telegraph passes through some of the wildest parts of Persia and a portion of Baluchistan, certainly as savage as any part of Afghanistan over which this railway would run, it is now perfectly safe, and is never damaged intentionally by the people. The Persian Government also having seen the advantages of the telegraph have constructed lines all over Persia on their own account.

The cost of this line of railway would not probably be high, the land, except in a few spots like the Herat Valley, where the country is highly cultivated, could be acquired either for nothing at all, as a gift from the Afghan Government, or (which would be preferable) by purchase at a low price from the owners themselves. A large portion of the line would run through tracts at present uncultivated though

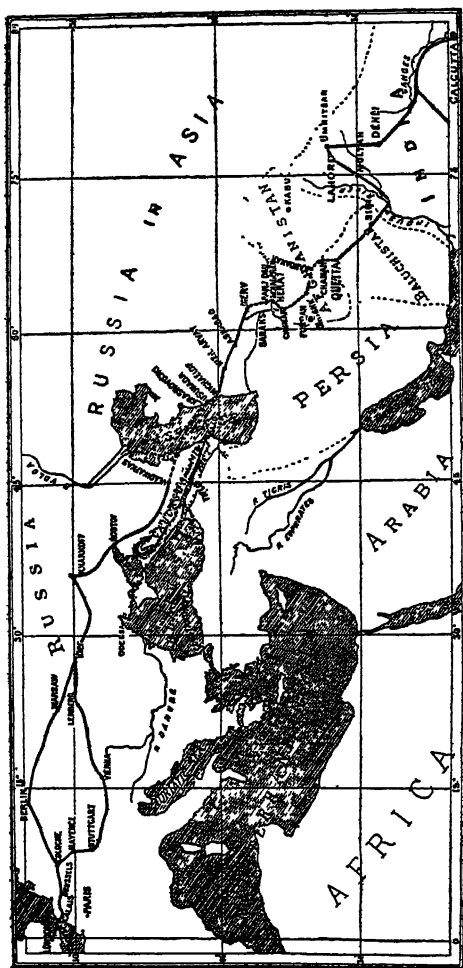
capable of cultivation, and quite ownerless, and over these tracts all that would be required would be a mere permission from the Afghan Government to take up the land that was necessary. A subsidy would have to be paid to the Ameer himself as a royalty for the use of the land and for his protection of the line. A small sum would also have to be paid to each local governor to interest him in the protection of the line passing through his district. Any damage would cause a temporary stoppage of the stipend paid to the governor of the district through which the line passed, and a guarantee on his part against a recurrence of the same would be necessary before his stipend was restored. It is remarkable how soon Asiatics begin to realise the advantages of a railway or telegraph, especially when their pockets are favourably affected by their maintenance in good order. I have no doubt there would be certain preliminary difficulties to be overcome in persuading the Ameer to permit the railway to be made, but I am confident that, if the whole facts were laid before him, showing him the advantages which would accrue from its construction, not only to England but to himself personally, all difficulties would be overcome.

As yet there are no railway lines in Persia, and, though several attempts have been made by various *entrepreneurs* to obtain the sanction of the Shah to the construction of a line of railway through Persia, sanction has as yet not been given, or, if given, so immediately revoked that no line was made. But in this matter I consider the Shah was in the right. In nearly all the schemes that I have seen for the construction of railways in Persia, though there were immense advantages to be obtained by the persons to whom the concession was to be granted, and though Persia itself as a country might have received benefit from the making of the lines, there was no advantage offered to the Shah himself or his officials individually, which were not counter-balanced a hundredfold by the concessions to be granted. Under these circumstances an Oriental is quite sharp enough to see that he will gain nothing by the transaction, and might lose a great deal, and therefore refuses permission for the construction of a railway.

Our Government, negotiating for a concession for a railroad, would in a very different position from a private individual, and might allow the pecuniary advantages to be so decidedly on the Ameer's side and that of his officials that he could do nothing but accept the liberal terms offered for what he could not help seeing was for his own advantage, especially if the matter was placed before him by an able advocate of the undertaking, of whose friendliness to himself the Ameer had no doubts. Where the line passed through a wilder country than usual it might be necessary in one or two instances, as between Girishk and Herat, to pay a small subsidy to the tribe through whose lands the line passed, besides that paid to the governor to obtain the help of the tribe for the maintenance of the railway in safety.

On the whole route from the Caspian Sea to the Indian frontier, north of Quettah, I have shown there are no mountains which would be any serious obstacle to the construction of a line of railway. I have also shown that the physical difficulty caused by the shifting sand-hills near the Caspian Sea, and at one or two other points, are all within Russian territory, and have been overcome by that enterprising people.

Also on the portion of the line which falls to us to construct, viz., the 560 miles within the Afghan frontier, from a point somewhere near Maruchak in the north to Chaman on the Indian border, there are no rivers of very large volume. The only one that would probably require an expensive bridge would be the Helmand. Under the above circumstances, and obtaining the land at a very low price, it is probable





the line could be constructed at a cost of about £6,000 a mile. A rather shorter line of communication would be obtained if, instead of following the Russian railway to Merv, a more direct line from Askabad through Sarakhs to the Herat valley were constructed; but my idea is that it would be best to make use of the Russian line to Merv already working, although it involves a small detour. Our object should simply be to connect our Indian railway system with the Russian railways, which as I have already pointed out, very nearly follows the shortest line possible to India.

Heretofore there would have been great difficulty in working a railroad through the semi-desert steppes near the Caspian Sea in consequence of the absence of fuel, but the discovery of great quantities of petroleum both to the westward and eastward of the Caspian Sea has obviated this difficulty. An unlimited supply of *astatki*, or petroleum refuse, can be drawn from the refineries at Baku on the Caspian Sea, and the trans-Caspian region through which the line passes is well supplied with petroleum at several points. At one of these points, Naphthania Gora, borings have been made and petroleum has been worked. A narrow gauge railway has been laid down from the Bala Ishem station of the trans-Caspian railroad to the petroleum wells at Naphthania Gora. Petroleum will no doubt also be found in places along the line within the Afghan border when the railway is carried on into Afghanistan, as it has been discovered near the Russian portion of the line, and even if it should not be found there, petroleum could very easily be carried in tank wagons and stored for use. The extreme cheapness and portability of petroleum fuel is a great factor in the future of Central-Asian railroads. A ton of petroleum is in working power nearly equal to two tons of coal, and besides this a ton of petroleum occupies only 33 cubic feet of space, while a ton of coal would occupy about 43 cubic feet, and the price of petroleum refuse at this moment at Baku is less than two shillings a ton. I here show you a diagram \* explaining the mode of using *astatki* or petroleum refuse as fuel on board the Caspian Sea steamers, and the mode adopted in the locomotives of the trans-Caspian railroad is nearly similar, the only difference is that a slightly different pulverizer is used. In the simplest form of pulverizer, a jet of steam is driven through a straight pipe ending in a slightly flattened orifice, *astatki* is then allowed to flow from a small tank through a curved pipe to meet the steam which pulverises it into a fine spray. The fine spray of mixed steam and *astatki* is injected by the force of the steam into the furnace in which a fire of wood or cotton waste has already been kindled. The fire is continually fed by this spray. It becomes necessary, however, before starting a steam engine burning mixed steam and *astatki*, to get up steam with either a wood or coal fire so as to obtain sufficient steam to use the pulverizer. With locomotives the small quantity of steam required for this purpose when first getting up steam is supplied from another locomotive that has already got up steam, or from a stationary boiler.

The last question we have to consider is whether such a railway would pay, and I believe it would. What I should propose is that a train should leave London three times a week at 8 p.m., worked in a way similar to the lightning express that starts from Paris three times a week for Varna is worked. There would be Pullman cars for sitting and dining in, as there are in the lightning express, and separate sleeping wagons. The passengers would be able to walk the whole length of the train down the central passage. The first 24 hours would take

\* See Appendix I &

them *via* Calais, Brussels and Cologne to Berlin, another 10 hours would take them to Warsaw, another 24 hours to Kharkof, and next 24 hours would take them to Vladikafkas, another 10 hours would take them to Petrofsk on the Caspian Sea, making a total of 92 hours from London to the Caspian Sea. Eighteen hours would be requisite for crossing the Caspian Sea from Petrofsk to Usunda, the terminus of the railway on the opposite coast, and for transhipping.

On the eastern side of the Caspian the progress would not be so rapid as in Europe, so probably 24 hours would be required to reach Askabad, another 24 hours for the journey from Askabad to Ghurian in Afghanistan, and 20 hours more for the journey from Ghurian to Kandahar, and probably 10 hours for the journey from Kandahar to Quettah, thus the whole journey from London to Quettah, would probably take 188 hours, or 7 days 20 hours. The distance travelled over, though 3,640 miles as taken on a globe, would probably be 4,000 miles by rail. If we divide 4,000 by this number of hours it will only give a little more than 21 miles an hour inclusive of stoppages. As food is provided in the train only very short stoppages would be made, as is done in a similar case by the lightning express. These fast trains would only carry letters, parcels, very light goods, and passengers.

Although at first I have calculated that 7 days and 20 hours would be required for the journey, after a time a much greater speed could probably be attained. The lightning express carrying the mails from Paris to Constantinople I believe travels at the rate of 40 miles an hour over part of the route, and at 25 miles an hour over the portion in Eastern Europe, where such a high rate of speed cannot be kept up. If we calculate only an average of 30 miles an hour inclusive of stoppages as the rate of speed to be aimed at over the whole line, and the distance with detours at 4,000 miles, the time required would be 133 hours, add 18 hours for crossing the Caspian Sea, and 2 hours for crossing the Straits of Dover, we should have 153 hours, or 6 days 9 hours, as the time required to reach Quettah within our Indian frontier. I need not point out the great advantage to trade and commerce if passengers, letters, parcels and light goods could be delivered in India in 6 days 9 hours, or even in the 7 days 20 hours, which I have calculated might at first be required for the journey. Any one who has travelled by the lightning express to Constantinople must know with how little fatigue to the passengers this journey could be accomplished.

Slower trains would, of course, be run for the goods traffic, and the local traffic on the different portions of the line would be great. The products of Afghanistan would be carried to Russia and India and *vice versa*, and Russian products to Germany and France and England. Arrangements would have to be made with the Russian Government for the passage of goods through that country in sealed bonded wagons, so as not to become liable to duty. Russia would be able to export her goods, especially sugar, of which she is a very large producer, and for which she has great difficulty in finding a market, to Afghanistan and India. This question of finding a market for her sugar has become a very burning one. Also a very large trade would be carried on in exporting kerosene oil, and the other petroleum products of Baku to the East, and I believe that the line would pay a fair dividend on the capital expended.

Objection may be made to this proposed railway that it would run through Russia, and that, therefore, we could not use it in time of war with that country. This is a truism; but the same objection holds good with reference to the use of a railway line through the territories of any foreign Power, that we could not use it if England were at war

with that Power, and as long as the shortest and easiest line of railway to India lies through Russia we cannot avoid this difficulty. This difficulty applies with equal force to our present route for passengers, letters and parcels overland, through France and Italy to Brindisi. The same objection was made to the telegraph line to India through Russia, but in some 25 years' working no difficulty on this score has arisen, and I think if this railway was constructed the interests of England and Russia would be so bound up that war between the two countries would not be so likely to occur, and if it occurred would be of less duration than if the railway had not been made. It seems to me unreasonable to refuse to use a line of communication, which would be of incalculable advantage to both parties in peace time, because in case of war it would be interrupted. At present all the advantages of the line rest with Russia, who has her railway ready, and can throw a large body of troops into northern Afghanistan at any moment, while our troops would have hundreds of miles of route march to make if we wished to oppose them.

A line of railway from our Indian frontier to Herat is a necessity and will have to be made if we wish to retain any permanent influence in Afghanistan, so that the question under consideration resolves itself into whether we should continue that line when made 120 miles or so to the Russian frontier, so as to have through railway communication to India by the shortest line.

I have elsewhere spoken of the great fertility of the Herat valley. When I visited it last year with Major-General Sir Peter Lumsden, G.C.B., C.S.I., I was much impressed by its fertility and high state of cultivation, and it is the only point of this part of Asia where an army can be fed, so that whoever holds possession of the Herat valley will have a preponderating influence in Afghanistan and Persia, and those two Powers would obey the orders of any great Power which held that place. England does not require Herat herself, but she must be in a position to uphold the Afghan power in its possession of that place, and this can only be effectively accomplished by opening communication by rail from India with Herat, and I firmly believe that nothing would conduce so much to peace between England and Russia as the construction of this railway through Afghanistan.

My object in reading this paper is to bring the subject before the English and Russian public with a view to the discussion of a project of vital importance to the two peoples. I do not say that there is nothing to be said against this project, but believe the advantages, will far outweigh the disadvantages, and no thing will help the decision of this question like a free discussion.

## APPENDIX IV

### BIBLE WORK IN PERSIA

[Reprinted from the *Monthly Reporter*, of April 1883, by kind permission of the British and Foreign Bible Society.]

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL C E STEWART, of the Bengal Staff Corps, was present at a meeting of the Committee on February 19, and gave some account of his experiences of Bible work in Persia, which, as will easily be understood, was received by the Committee with special gratification. He said :—

‘I travelled on the eastern and north-western frontier of Persia. A portion of Persia called Daragez projects into the Turkoman country. The easiest road from the Akhal Tekke country to the Merv country is through a part of Daragez ; for this reason many Turkomans are found there, and the population of the more exposed parts of Daragez is largely composed of Turkomans. The chief town of this part of country is called Mahomedabad, and I spent some two months in Daragez. One day, when I entered a shop, a man produced a box of books. They were, much to my astonishment, Bibles of your Society, and also Testaments in Persian. There were also portions of the New Testament in Jagatai Tartar, the language spoken by the Turkomans. I asked this man where he got these. He informed me that Daud, the colporteur of the American Bible Society at Mashad, where there is a tomb which is visited by multitudes of pilgrims, was a friend of his, and had entrusted these books to him for sale. This Daud is a converted Jew. The man, after I had conversed with him a little, said, “I should so like to have a private conversation with you.” He knew I was a Christian, though he did not know I was a European, as I was disguised as an Armenian horse-dealer. He came to see me late one night, and we conversed for about two hours. He said that he had read the Bible that he had been deeply impressed with what he had read, and that he believed every word of it. Since reading the Bible, he had thought much about Christianity. He said, “Tell me, am I a Christian?” I answered, “If you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is God—that He came into the world and died for your sins—you are a Christian.” He replied, “I fully believe all that.” I shook hands with him, and said I greeted him as a brother Christian.

‘My first journey, when I was in disguise, was on my own account ; but since then I have been employed in Persia by the Government, and I have travelled openly. On this second journey I met Daud, the colporteur, at Mashad, and purchased a Persian Bible of this Society’s from him. I will here mention a circumstance which happened on my first journey, to show how ready Persians are to accept Bibles or parts of Scripture in their own tongue. In a village a Mohammedan priest came to me and said, “I hear you Christians have a book which tells

you of Adam, of the flood of Noah, and of Jesus?" I said, "Yes, we have." He answered, 'I went to Mashad to try and get a copy of the Book from the Jews, but they would not give me one.' I said, "I will give you one, if you like, and can prove to me that you can read it." He showed me that he could read it by reading several chapters which I chose, and I gave him the Bible in Persian. He was so pleased that I heard him reading it out to the people in the village, and he considered it a great gift. Shiah Mohammedans are much less fanatical than Sunni Mohammedans, and the Persians are Shiahs.

'In Persia there is a very interesting sect of people called Babis. This sect was originated by Ali Mahommed, a native of Shiraz. He was born in 1823, and about 1843 commenced preaching, announcing that he had been commissioned to preach a new religion. He called himself Al Bab, or "the door," meaning that he was the door to heaven. He said that the spirits of all men emanated from God, and would, after various migration, return to God. His religion was a species of pantheism. He said that a special spirit from God entered into certain people, and that the spirit which had been in Abraham, in Moses, in our Saviour, and others, was now in him. His tenets spread very widely, and his followers, who were very numerous, rose in revolt against the government. Ali Mahomed, who was a quiet sort of man, did not join in the revolt, but he was imprisoned, and eventually shot by order of the Government in Tabriz. Now these Babis, who have ceased to be Mohammedans, and who have lost their prophet, long for a new religion. In fact they are inquirers, and just in the frame of mind to become Christians. They only require teaching, and leading to Christ. They are in the frame of mind when missionary effort would be most productive of good.

'Much may be done in Persia in a quiet way by missionaries, and the people, especially Babis, hear them gladly. Missionaries, cannot preach publicly in Persia, but the people will come to their houses and listen to them. Another reason why missionaries are wanted in Persia is to prevent the large body of Nestorian and Armenian Christians being perverted to Mohammedanism. I visited a village called Abbasabad, on the borders of Khorasan. This had been a Christian village, but now there was not a Christian in the place; all had become Mohammedans. I asked one of them how that was. He said, "What could we do? When we came here we were Christians, and for nine generations we remained so; but three generations ago some of us began to become Mussulmans. We were so cut off from all Christians and teaching, and now there is not one Christian in the village." A European traveller who visited this village in 1845 mentions that some of the population were then still Christians. It is quite as urgent to prevent Christians, for want of teaching, lapsing into Mohammedanism, as to convert Mohammedans.'

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